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Faculty of Arts and Languages
Department of English

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE LECTURE COMPREHENSION & NOTE TAKING STRATEGIES OF SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BLIDA

Submitted by:
Mr. Mâamar Missoum

Supervised by:
Mrs. Yasmine Boukhedimi

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Examining Board

Chair: Professor Faiza Bensemmane, University of Algiers
Supervisor: Mrs. Yasmine Boukhedimi, Chargé de Cours, University of Algiers
Internal Examiner: Doctor Fatiha Hamitouche, University of Algiers

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation, and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers

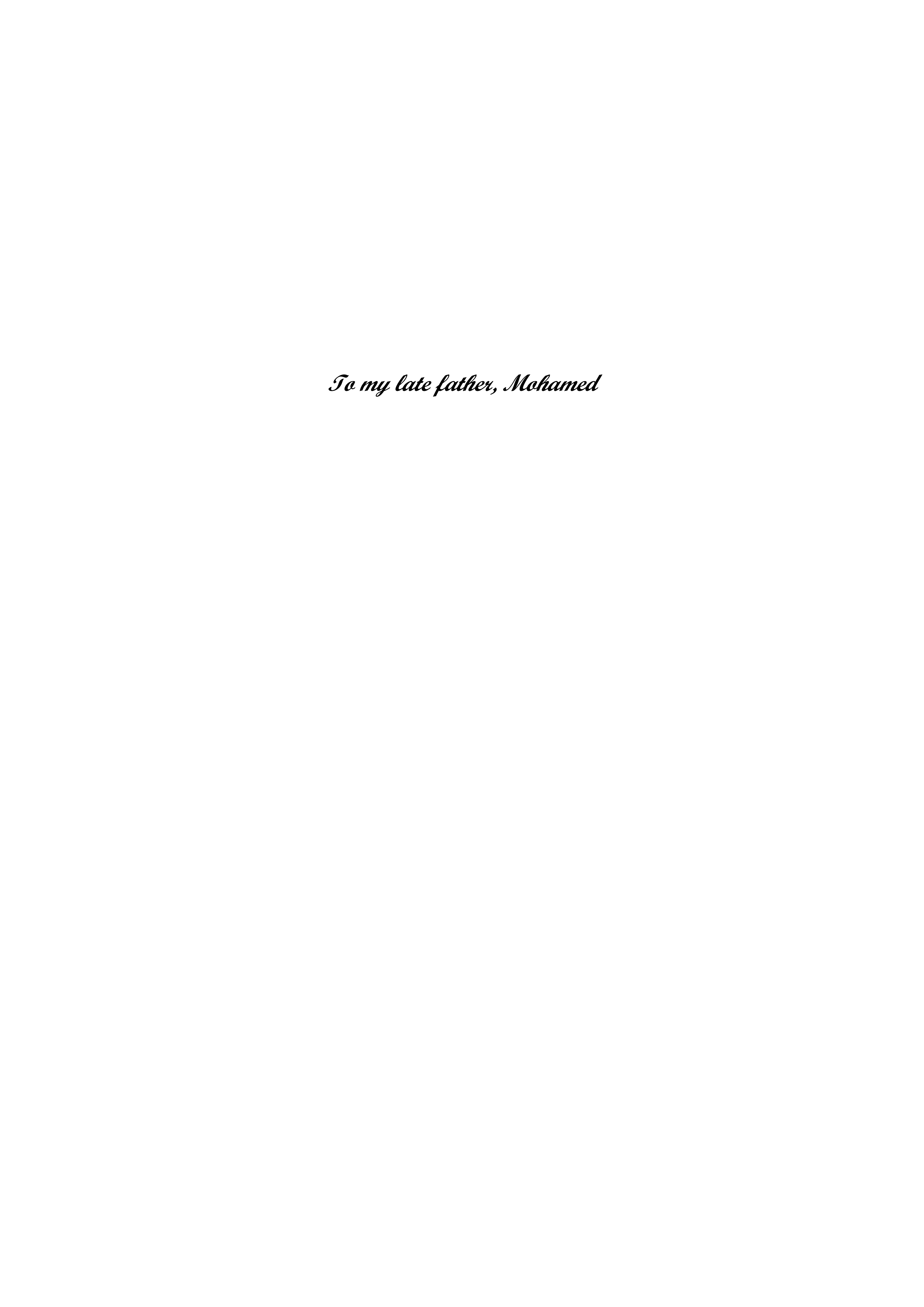
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Signed: Mr. Mâamar MISSOUM

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Thank You.



To my late father, Mohamed

ABSTRACT

For many years (1995-2002), the Department of English of the University of Blida witnessed low rates of academic achievement of students preparing an English Degree. An analysis of the second year students' course grades in academic years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 and data from a preliminary survey with some teachers reflected signs that the students were experiencing learning difficulties. This situation prompted an investigation of a suspected factor behind those difficulties, namely, comprehending and taking notes from lectures. Listening to lectures and taking notes from them are the most widely used academic skills in the English Department.

The main purpose of the present study is to examine the students' lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. Effective listeners employ certain strategies to understand lecture content and note down useful information. The review of the literature sets the theoretical framework for the study by defining key lecture comprehension and note taking strategies.

Five research tools (observation of authentic lectures, a test of lecture comprehension, the subjects' lecture notes, survey questionnaires and an analysis of instruction in listening and note taking in the English Department) were used to investigate the strategies the subjects use to comprehend lectures and take note from them. Triangulation is necessary to moderate the various potential threats to the validity of the data. The findings obtained seem to indicate that most of the subjects were not using efficient lecture comprehension and note taking strategies, and that listening instruction was not providing adequate training in these strategies. Recommendations are offered to improve the ability of students in Algerian English Departments to learn better from lectures.

CONTENTS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General introduction

Algerian departments of English are increasingly challenged to train competent English graduates. Unfortunately, the English department of the University of Blida seemed to have difficulties to deliver high student academic achievement. The situation triggered an investigation of this critical issue. This General introduction opens with a statement of the main issue investigated and presents the background to this study. Then, the Rationale for the study elaborates on reasons which make the issue worthy of research. The following section states what the present research purports to do about the main issue and delineates its scope. It also introduces the rest of the chapters in the present dissertation. Finally, the last section outlines the procedures used in collecting data needed to inform questions formulated in the present study.

1. Statement of the problem

For many years (1995-2002), academic achievement in the English Department of the University of Blida was lower than average. The main goal of this study is to determine whether such low performance was due to insufficient lecture-related skills. The present study, therefore, investigates the ability of the students at the end of their second year to use efficient lecture comprehension and note taking strategies that are critical to their learning from the lectures and ultimately to their academic learning at large.

2. Background to the study

In recent years, teachers in the English Department of the University of Blida informally complained about the students' perceptibly low academic achievement. These complaints are consistent with the researcher's

observations during his thirteen-year experience both as a student and as a teacher in the Department. Signs of academic underachievement in the English Department can be observed in failure rates during the period from 1995 to 2002.

As will be substantiated in the rationale of the study below, the students' performance, particularly in the prevalent content modules, shows low academic achievement. Content courses consisting essentially of literature, civilization and linguistics constitute more than half of the course load for the second, third, and fourth year students in Algerian departments of English. Overall academic achievement of students in these departments, therefore, depends significantly on successful learning from content modules. And as the teaching almost always takes the form of lectures, efficient learning in these courses requires the students to be good at aural comprehension and note taking. For this reason, the students' lecture comprehension and note taking strategies were suspected to be an area that necessitates a formal investigation.

3. The Research rationale

The complaints within the English Department about the students' low academic achievement prompted an initial formal investigation in order to find out evidence, if any, of the reported academic underachievement. As a first step, we examined the second year students' annual grade averages for the 2000 academic year. The number of students who had to sit for the retake exam was very high; only 31.81% of the total number had obtained passing grades (10/20) or higher.

For greater reliability, course grades of the 2001 and 2002 classes of second year students were analysed (See Appendix B 1 and 2). Grades obtained by subjects in their regular courses should reflect, to a reasonable degree, the

level of academic achievement. For the present study, the grades were analysed so as to get an assessment of three key parameters, namely, the students' overall academic achievement, their relative performance in content modules, and their performance in the regular listening tests. To this effect, the yearly averages of language modules i.e. speaking, reading, writing, phonetics and grammar, of content modules and those of the listening module for each student from classes 2001 and 2002 were calculated along with descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, median and mode) for each class.

Table 1 (Course grades of the 2001 and 2002 second year students) presents the results of the grade analysis. The analysis of regular course grades of two successive classes of second year students seems to give an indication about the level of academic achievement in the English Department. Around 50% of the 2001 and 2002 second year students failed to obtain a passing average. The grades also indicate that across categories (overall, content modules, language modules and listening) between 31 to 80% of the students failed to attain an average performance as measured by the course tests.

Table 1
Course grades of the 2001 and 2002 second year students

	Lis01	Lis02	Con01	Con02	Lge01	Lge02	Lis02(1st y)	Con02 (1st y)	Combined02
M	53.89	55.6	43.96	46.52	52.57	54.41	34.74	43.33	50.95
SD	13.42	10.84	7.6	10.39	7.51	9.85	12.67	11.92	9.2
Median	52.5	55	43.25	46.3	52.5	55.3	32.5	43.75	50.85
Mode	70	57.5	47.4	58	50	54.05	50	47.5	50
FP %	40.82	34	80.41	69.25	31.02	35.95	80.39	66.67	44.74

Key:

All values are out of 100 except *SD* (Standard Deviation) values which are out of 20
2001 n = 245 2002 n = 152
Lis= Listening Lge= Language modules
01, 02= classes of students 2001, 2002 Con= Content modules
FP= Failure Percentage or the percentage of students whose score lie below passing average 10/20

These findings are consistent with data from the preliminary survey which was conducted with the teachers in the English Department. Seven teachers returned a brief questionnaire (see Appendix A). The data gathered from this survey corroborate the low academic achievement observed in the analysis of the regular course grades discussed above. The responses given by teachers reflect their dissatisfaction with the students' overall academic performance. The respondents rated the students' academic achievement at level 2 on a scale of 5.

Many factors may determine academic performance and, hence, can be responsible for high or low achievement. Among these are course content, teaching practices, the learners' language proficiency, the learners' study skills, etc. The preliminary survey of the teachers in the English Department pointed to aural comprehension and note taking as possible key areas of deficiency in the students' academic skills. Similarly, the literature about academic listening and note taking and studies in EFL (English as a foreign language) departments (e.g. Johns 1981, Harper 1985, Light and Teh-Yuan 1991, Duda 2000) suggests that difficulties should be expected in these areas. EFL listeners are often dissatisfied with their performance in lecture comprehension. Difficulty increases because EFL students in the English Department learn academic content via English, i.e., the language they are supposed to learn. EFL students need more efficient aural comprehension and note taking skills to outperform their developing English ability so as to learn better from lectures.

Indeed, many studies (e.g. Johns 1981, Harper 1985, Light and Teh-Yuan 1991, Duda 2000) identify listening as a crucial academic study skill. Listening comprehension is important for university students because lectures are the students' most available source of knowledge. Actually, in EFL contexts, the traditional lecture is the most widely used method of teaching in universities throughout the world (Flowerdew 1994, Prodromou 1989).

Students in the English Department of the University of Blida, for example, receive the bulk of instruction in traditional lecture form.

Lecture-based instruction requires not only aural but also note taking skills. Otto (1979) and introspective studies undertaken by Ostler (1980), Robertson (1984) and Dunkel et al. (1989) indicate the importance of note taking as a study skill. In another study, Powers (1986) surveyed 144 lecturers in the United States and found note taking to be a crucial skill. The lecturers rated note taking and retrieving information from notes as most important skills for academic performance at large (Powers 1986, cited in Flowerdew 1994:11). Successful learning in universities requires command of lecture comprehension and note taking.

4. Purpose and scope of the study

In the light of the students' need for lecture comprehension and note taking skills identified above, the objective set for this research is to investigate the students' ability in these two important academic skills. Do the students in the English Department of the University of Blida have adequate command of lecture comprehension and note taking to learn efficiently from academic lectures? This study seeks to determine whether a relationship exists between the students' learning difficulties and insufficient lecture comprehension and note taking skills. And if so, is low ability in these two areas a consequence of inadequate instruction in these skills?

In preparation to inform these two questions, Chapter one reviews the literature about three key issues related to learning from academic lectures; i.e. aural comprehension, note taking and the academic lecture. First, it presents a description of the context in which the two target study skills are used: the academic lecture. Then, the processes of aural comprehension of lecture input

and encoding of that input in notes are examined in the subsequent sections. The Review of the literature particularly focuses on identifying and describing the key strategies involved in these processes. These strategies form the construct under investigation in the framework of the present study.

Chapters two, three and four are devoted to the research which was undertaken to seek answers to the questions formulated for this study. They describe how we planned and carried out the study of second year students' lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. Research procedures used to this effect are described and the results quantified and summarized. These chapters also discuss methodological issues related to the selection and use of the research tools and present an assessment of the validity of the data. According to the insights from the Review of the literature and the data collected from this study, some implications for lecture comprehension and note taking pedagogy in the English Department are set forth in Chapter five. The latter puts forward suggestions that may promote successful learning from lectures in the English Department.

5. Procedures of data collection

Seeking to collect data from different perspectives about the subjects' lecture comprehension and note taking, the present study used five research tools. A test of lecture comprehension was designed for the purposes of this study to tap the ability of the subjects to comprehend quasi authentic lectures. And regular lectures were observed to find out features of lectures in the English Department. Besides, the official statement of the listening syllabus of the Department of English and the subjects' listening course notes were analysed for data about instruction in listening. Samples of the students' lecture notes were analysed to get insights into their use of note taking strategies.

Finally, survey questionnaires were used to gather data about all the previous areas from the subjects as well as their teachers.

In conclusion, prior to and during the conduction of the present study, teachers in the English Department of the University of Blida seemed to share an impression of poor academic achievement by their students. Therefore, the researcher took on the task of a systematic investigation of the issue. As a first step, an analysis of the regular course grades of three successive classes of second year students and a preliminary survey with teachers indicated that the students performed low particularly in content modules.

The present study investigates second year students' lecture comprehension and note taking. The investigation of the lecture comprehension and note taking skills of students in the English Department of the University of Blida is motivated by the insights gained from the teachers' responses to a preliminary survey. The surveyed teachers identified study skills including listening comprehension as possible reasons behind observed academic underachievement. These insights receive support from research on study skills for university studies, which highlights the role of listening and note taking in academic learning. Besides, the curriculum in the English Department consists essentially of content modules and these are taught through lecturing, which requires a strong lecture comprehension and note taking ability.

Notes:

Definition of Terms:

- The term *Content modules* refers to courses of literature, civilisation, cultural studies, linguistics, psycho-pedagogy and didactics in the curriculum of the department of English. Content is the main learning goal in these courses in comparison to *language modules* (listening, reading, writing, speaking and grammar).

- *The English Department* with capitals is used throughout the present study to mean the Department of English of the University of Blida.

- *Scores*: The raw grades obtained by the students on regular tests, by the subjects on the Test of Listening Comprehension or the note taking task.

- *Strategy*: A more or less conscious action undertaken by learners to carry out a given task, pertaining to aural comprehension or note taking in academic lectures in this study.

- The *Test of Lecture Comprehension* and *The Questionnaires* refer to data collection tools designed by the researcher for the purposes of the present study. These are appended at the end of the dissertation.

CHAPTER ONE

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter one: Review of the literature

The present study is concerned with the ability of students in Algerian departments of English to learn efficiently from lectures. Learning from academic lectures calls for the use of two macro strategies. These are a) comprehending extended extracts of spoken language; and b) retaining lecture information through note taking to support memory in maintaining a mental representation of the target knowledge. This Review of the literature falls in three sections. The first section examines the lecture as the context in which Algerian university students of English undertake the learning of academic content. Then the second and third sections identify the key tasks and strategies required for efficient comprehension and noting of lecture content. The discussion focuses on relevant issues and identifying key lecture comprehension and note taking tasks and strategies. This identification is crucial to the design of this study as it spells out the criterion construct that is employed in assessing the subjects' on lecture comprehension and note taking.

1.1 The Academic lecture - key features

Lecture characteristics should be taken into consideration in a study which purports to investigate the students' lecture aural comprehension and note taking. This section examines key features of form as well as content in lectures. The following description should help us determine the demands placed on the students who need to understand these lectures and take useful notes on them.

1.1.1 Lecture discourse vs. other types of discourse

The first step towards describing the lecture consists of distinguishing it from other types of discourse. The discourse of academic lectures differs significantly from written discourse as well as from oral discourse. As the main purpose of this chapter is to characterise what competent students do to comprehend lectures, we need to consider the distinctive discourse features of academic lectures.

Academic lectures are different from written discourses and also from other types of spoken discourse. Oral features like hesitation, repetition, pauses, and misspeaks reflect the spontaneity and fast pace of spoken discourse. However, the more formal and planned lectures slide a little towards oralised prose. Some lectures may contain features generally associated with written discourse. When lecturers read from notes, discourse becomes more formal and elaborated.

It is also appropriate to distinguish lecture discourse from other types of spoken discourse. We can point to some of the differences between conversations and lectures. For instance, the 'idea unit' in conversational discourse contains a mean word number of seven words; whereas in lecture discourse, the mean is eleven words (Hansen and Jensen1994). Besides, lectures are usually longer than conversations and contain less interaction (see 1.1.7 below). The latter may cause aural processing problems. According to Weissberg (1980), listening to extended oral discourse is the most difficult task for many EFL students. The disadvantage with the lecture as far as length is concerned stems for Wallace (1997:35) from listeners' limited attention span. A drop in attention occurs generally after fifteen to twenty minutes.

Other major differences include features such as the occurrence of note taking and the integration of information from other media (board notations, handouts and visual aids) which are concomitant to listening in lectures. These distinctive features of academic lectures are quite important especially for instruction in lecture comprehension. This point is taken up below under 5.1 Guidelines for instruction in EFL lecture comprehension and note taking.

1.1.2 Lecture discourse structure and markers

Academic lecture discourse features a number of salient characteristics that reflect regularity and specificity in lecture input. This section reviews two models that characterise the discourse of lectures in terms of topics or phases. Then, we examine rhetorical marking in lectures. The discussion also covers the possible effect of discourse markers on lecture comprehension.

One of the most realistic characterizations of academic lectures describes the macro structure of academic lectures in terms of six interspersed and recurrent phases. According to Young (1994), in a '*discourse structuring phase'*, lecturers indicate explicitly, via the use of rhetorical questions and modality of intention and prediction, the direction of the lecture and mark the focal points to come. *The conclusion* contains a summary of the lecture. The informational content of the lecture is transmitted in the '*content'* phase. Illustration is given in the phase of *examples*. A less frequent phase is '*evaluation'* or '*comment'* in which information is evaluated. Finally, during interaction, lecturers interact with listeners (Young1994). Phasal analysis reflects better authentic lecture discourse than traditional alternatives which characterize lectures in terms of a linear sequence of introduction, body and conclusion.

Another interesting model identifies lecture structure as consisting of major topics, sub-topics and minor topics. According to Hansen (1994), major topics are identifiable thanks to the signals that introduce them like meta-talk expressions ('right', 'I mean…', 'Let me clarify…', etc.), summary statements and visual aids (Hansen1994). Including content and topics in the analysis of lecture discourse represents a significant development, considering the primary function of lectures as a channel for transmitting academic knowledge. Content naturally stands out as the most important feature in the discourse of lectures.

Both previous models identify discourse markers as a key component of lecture discourse. These markers especially introductions and conclusions are extremely important to signal rhetorical phases, content topics and sub-topics. These are markers that can readily assist listeners in anticipating the overall structure of the lecture. Lecturers usually mark these phases in lectures using rhetoric signals. Wallace (1984:57-8) quite rightly states that discourse markers do signal the way in which lecture content is organized, sequenced and presented. Rhetorical markers fall into a number of types in relation to the specific function they fulfil in the discourse. Lectures may contain markers of listing, cause and effect, time relationships, illustration, rephrasing, etc. And meta-talk, pauses, voice modulation may indicate direction in a lecture (e.g. 'let's examine reasons for…', 'let me try to explain…' etc.) or mark the relevance of information.

Researchers investigated the effect of discourse markers on the comprehension of lectures. In Chaudron and Richards' experiment (1986), for instance, the results showed a positive effect of rhetorical signalling on lecture comprehension (1986, cited in Dunkel & Davis1994:56-59). To explain that effect, Moirand (1990) states that contextual cues and markers help listeners' comprehension by assisting listeners in the process of anticipation and prediction of upcoming input in spoken language.

However, another study did not corroborate Chaudron & Richards' (1986) findings. Dunkel & Davis (1994) conducted a follow up study on the work done by Chaudron & Richards (1986). The study did not identify a significant effect of rhetorical signalling on comprehension. The researchers suggest that the difference in the results between their study and Chaudron & Richards's (1986) may be attributed to differences in research procedures (Dunkel & Davis1994). Nevertheless, a careful reading of data from the Dunkel & Davis's (1994) study reveals that the subjects took more efficient notes when markers were available. This suggests that comprehension as reflected by more efficient note taking seems to be enhanced by the presence of discourse markers.

1.1.3 Key formal variables in lectures

Besides discourse characteristics, academic lectures display other formal features. For instance, listeners may be exposed to a range of accents in the lecture hall. Connor (1997) and Kachru (1998) actually recognize the existence of many 'Englishes' in the world. British, American, Australian Canadian and other dialects are commonly accepted varieties of English today throughout the world (Connor1997:16, Kachru1998:74). Lecturers' dialectal variation may increase aural comprehension difficulties for EFL listeners. Indeed, Richards (1983) warns that accent is a factor which may contribute to difficulties for non-native speakers' lecture comprehension. For instance, in Mason (1994), the EFL subjects who had been trained in standard academic English reported problems of comprehension when the lecturer switched to informal and colloquial styles (Mason1994:204). Different styles engender differences in the knowledge needed to achieve acceptable comprehension.

Challenges to comprehension can emerge from phonetic reduction and fast speech rate. They may lead to mishearing and comprehension errors. Readers can choose a reading speed that suits their encoding speed; listeners, however, must listen according to the speaker's speed of delivery. According to Flowerdew & Miller (1992), even at 'normal' speed of delivery, the processing load may be excessive for under-prepared listeners within time constraints (1992, cited in Flowerdew1994:13). As speech is generally fast, or perceived to be so, listeners must comprehend very quickly.

Speakers produce speech under planning pressures and may opt for ease of articulation at the expense of intelligibility. They may also make performance errors including wrong pitch and stress. Unintelligibility may increase due to other aspects that may be specific to the speech of non-native speaker lecturers. A study on the discourse of non-native teaching assistants in American universities revealed that non-native speaker lecturers had problems especially in using prosodic features to indicate prominence and focus (Tyler1992:722). Prosodic and non-verbal features like facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, posture and kinesics are significant factors in oral-aural interaction. All of these can contribute to or affect the communication of meaning.

1.1.4 Key content features of lectures

Academic lectures also exhibit a number of other characteristics related to their informational content. Similarly to formal features, content characteristics of lectures determine the listenability of the input. In the following sub-section, we discuss key features of lecture content; namely, density of new information and the complexity of concepts presented in lectures especially in literature modules.

An important content feature of lecture input relates to 'propositional density'. Text density may be defined as the content value which refers to the ratio of new information to the text length. Shohamy & Inbar (1988, cited in Hansen & Jensen1994: 246), remark that idea units contain more information in lectures than in conversational discourse except for scripted oral discourse such as news broadcasts. Lectures, where teachers read from notes, may then be even denser with propositional content. Comprehending these lectures should therefore be expected to demand more processing efforts.

Higher propositional density in lecture discourse can be ascribed to the main function of lectures in the academic culture: the transmission of knowledge. Usually, new, complex and often abstract concepts are tackled in lectures. Research (Flowerdew and Miller1992, cited in Flowerdew1994; Benson 1994:192) indicates that lectures make cognitive demands on the students which particularly relate to the learning of complex systems of ideas. These demands sometimes pose comprehension problems to EFL listeners. In Algerian English departments, students usually study topics and concepts (e.g. literary, historical, and linguistic) that mostly belong to foreign cultures and societies or new subject areas. Encounters with many literary, philosophical and linguistic concepts can scarcely be available for students outside lecture settings. The conceptual complexity of philosophies such as transcendentalism and linguistic theories like Generativism probably make the lectures in the English Department of higher conceptual complexity, and hence more demanding for EFL students to comprehend.

The subject of literature might be the source par excellence of new and complex concepts. This issue must be taken into consideration as more time and grade weight is assigned to the study of literature than any other subject especially for third and fourth year students (see the description of syllabi of the English Department of the University of Blida, pp 102-3). Actually, Zughoul (1989) found out that literature modules dominate instruction in many

departments of English in Arab universities. In this context, an investigation of lecture comprehension must include the cultural and linguistic demands that lectures about literature would make on EFL listeners (cf. section 1.2 below in the present chapter).

Biblical references can be cited as an illustration of culture-specific conceptual demands in lectures about literature. Allusions to the Bible, especially in early American and English literatures are quite recurrent. Foreign concepts that increase lecture density for EFL listeners can also be of a socio-cultural nature. Krsul (1989) points out that EFL students are exposed to a different culture through literature. The experience of aristocracy of birth and blood, the different moral codes temporal and spiritual among other aspects can pose comprehension problems. In this perspective, the content of lectures about literature can be expected to demand greater comprehension efforts from EFL students with different cultural and religious backgrounds.

1.1.5 The Language factor in lectures

Content features in academic lectures determine the language used by lecturers to convey informational content. Complex and new concepts are often expressed through new or less frequent lexical items. Lecture density derives not only from the amount of new concepts but also from the linguistic items that the listeners find new or difficult to assimilate. The students in Algerian English departments often have a double task to perform in the lecture hall: learning new concepts along with new linguistic items. Language is, then, a relevant element in a characterisation of lecture input in EFL contexts. This sub-section is devoted to a discussion of key lexical and syntactic features of academic lectures and the effect these features may have on EFL students' comprehension of lecture input.

Language was identified as a crucial factor in the comprehension of lectures in content modules. The syntactic and lexical characteristics of lecture input can help or impede EFL students' comprehension of lectures. Partly based on her experience in learning French, Leki (1991) expressed a particular difficulty with the French language of the seventeenth century. She concluded that linguistic complexity may deter students and lead them to frustration. The researcher pinpoints vocabulary as the most obvious problem in literary discourse. This was corroborated by research which found out that, for EFL students, lecture vocabulary can become a problem. Even among proficient speakers, intelligibility problems due to lexical reference occur when a specialized jargon is used (Benson1989:436, Flowerdew & Miller1992, cited in Flowerdew1994:13). Indeed, many terms used in lectures about literature and linguistics may be expected to fall beyond the boundaries of EFL students' English knowledge.

Literature in particular can generate linguistic difficulties for EFL listeners. Literature lecturers necessarily cite and comment on literary texts. The jargon of literary criticism pervades the discourse of these lectures. Moreover, literature is recognized as a language use which has a particular syntax and lexicon. Writers may take some freedom with English syntax and use words in quite new and special ways (see Prodromou1989, Topping1968). More specifically, literary works written several centuries ago may particularly be very demanding linguistically. Krsul (1989) and Slih (1989) noted that EFL students may be at an inadequate proficiency level to comprehend early English literature. Finally, Parry (1991:641) warns against input which is over-concentrated with lexical items unknown to the listeners. EFL listeners may not find sufficient contextual support to make out the meaning of new items.

At the syntactic level, research (Flowerdew 1994:20, Hansen & Jensen1994: 245) identified a number of features that characterize lecture input. For instance, lectures exhibit a high incidence of 'that' clauses, subordinate

clauses, conditional clauses and indirect questions. Syntactic embedding makes idea units in lectures longer and more complex, which may require more processing efforts to analyse structure. EFL students may also find difficulty to process longer utterances due to reference problems. Within limits of the capacity of short term memory, the listeners have to maintain topic and reference continuity, especially with the frequent use of relative and personal pronouns.

1.1.6 Support media

Apart from the form and content aspects discussed above, academic lectures also contain other features. Lecturers usually use a number of tools so as to supplement and clarify the oral input in their lectures. Common support media include handouts, board notes or other visually displayed materials. Such support can also take the form of lecture outline and readings about the lecture topic before it is discussed in class.

Visual information may aid lecture comprehension in a number of ways. Visual support tools can assist the listeners' aural comprehension by maintaining their attention during long lectures. As Pierce (1989) observes, visual aids seem to raise enthusiasm and eventually sustain attention. They are likely to produce a quite engrossing impression and hence increase recall. A common piece of furniture in any lecture hall is the board. Notes on the board then can be expected to be the most common type of visual information that is available for the students of English in lecture halls. Notes on the board usually indicate structure and topics in lectures. They also serve as cues of the importance of informational content. Also helpful are lecture outlines, which provide valuable assistance to the listeners in identifying the overall structure of the lecture and its main ideas. These tools help attentive listeners in anticipating upcoming text.

1.1.7 Interaction

Like visual support, lecturer-student interaction plays a role in maintaining and focusing the attention of listeners on the lecture content. Interaction may help comprehension by raising the level of listeners' involvement and interest. Higher interest tends to foster efforts to understand and hence may promote comprehension. Listeners can also use interaction to tackle comprehension challenges.

Research (Rounds1987, Mason1994, and Rost1996) underscores the role of interaction in the lecture hall and the responsibility of lecturers and listeners in promoting it. Interaction in lecture settings is important because it may influence what happens in the lecture hall. Lecturers may change direction or pace in response to feedback from the audience. Interaction also helps lecturers check understanding among the audience. Sometimes, however, interaction may hinder lecture comprehension. For instance, in Mason's (1994:205), the subjects reported that lecture difficulty increased when students' oral participation intervened. Peer intervention may be perceived as confusing sometimes. The peers' lower intelligibility due to a lack of voice projection, lexical, phonological or syntactic deficiencies and perceived irrelevance of the content of the intervention can make peer intervention a complicating rather than a facilitating element.

Overall, well-managed lecturer-students interaction tends to promote comprehension and a positive atmosphere. Interaction is a tool which can sustain the listeners' attention, help check their understanding and detect comprehension problems. Besides, a good learning atmosphere based on cooperation and mutual receptivity would reassure and encourage learners. It may reduce the students' anxiety and ultimately augment their receptivity to the lectures.

1.2 EFL Lecture comprehension - key tasks & strategies

The features in academic lectures discussed above serve as guidelines in our investigation of the lecture comprehension and note taking demands made on the students. The current section focuses on characterising key tasks and efficient strategies used by students to cope with those demands. These tasks and strategies represent the main component in the theoretical basis for the present study.

Section 1.1 highlights key distinctive features of academic lectures. These features suggest that comprehending and learning from lectures in the English Department can be expected to generate specific demands in terms of aural comprehension tasks and the strategies needed to carry them out efficiently. The present section examines the major tasks expected from the students and how efficient listeners go about completing them. We pinpoint efficient strategies that listeners use to complete each task.

Transmission of knowledge is the primary function of academic lectures. The major task that the students are expected to complete in the lecture hall consists in comprehending that very knowledge. Based on the literature about academic listening, especially Rost (1996), aural comprehension of an extended extract of spoken language requires the use of strategies especially,

- Formulating a conceptual framework of the lecture
- Identifying and comprehending the informational content
- Coping with conceptual and linguistic demands of academic lectures
- Triangulation of the status of information
- Synthesising input across propositions
- Monitoring one's comprehension throughout

(References are given for each strategy in upcoming §§)

1.2.1 Formulating a conceptual framework of the lecture

Following research by Richards (1983) and Rost (1996) for instance, a critical task to do during listening academic lectures consists of identifying the purpose and scope of the lecture. Discourse processing relies on knowledge of the overall structure of lectures. Efficient listeners attempt to formulate, as soon as possible, a conceptual framework of the lecture that will link incoming information together. To achieve this, listeners should employ at least the following strategies:

a) Wonder systematically what the aim of the lecture, its topics and organisation are before and during the introductory statements. The literature (Hamp-Lyons1983, Richards1983 and Powers1986) emphasises the skill of recognising the structure of the lecture. Listeners should be able to recognise the organisation of lectures, and distinguish levels of hierarchy (main topic, supporting details and examples).

b) Identify and use lecture introductions, outlines and board notes to predict and find out the topic and sub-topics of the lecture.

c) Use course outlines and assigned readings (handouts, books) to get more details about the content of the lecture beforehand.

d) Interpret markers for topic change to check sub-topics announced by the lecturer earlier or anticipated by the listener. Research (Chaudron et al.1994, Young1994) established the importance of attending to discourse markers as an efficient strategy for listening comprehension.

e) Identify key words related to the main topic (Richards1983 and Powers1986) and sub-topics in order to check predictions about these.

1.2.2 Identifying and comprehending the informational content

As stated above, the students of English attend lectures with the general purpose of learning knowledge about regular modules; i.e. literature, civilisation and linguistics. Informational content in lectures represents therefore, the focal point for both lecturers and students. The latter need to identify not only the topic and sub-topics but also information about these, or propositional content in the lecture. This critical task requires the listeners to use the following four key strategies:

1.2.2.1 Understand key lexical items related to the topic of the lecture (Richards1983, Powers1986, cited in Rost1996). This will help them understand statements about the topic and sub-topics.

1.2.2.2 Identify or infer links between interdependent propositions (Rost1996). They also need to predict and follow the development of the topic. Efficient listeners attend to markers like introductions, and meta-talk and markers like connectors which signal when the lecturer is elaborating on a topic or shifting to another one. And

1.2.2.3 Infer the lecturer's implicit meaning (Rost1996, Cornaire1998) as a part of the informational content may not be explicitly stated.

1.2.3 Coping with conceptual and linguistic demands of academic lectures

The major challenge to EFL students when listening to academic lectures relates to dealing with the simultaneous higher conceptual and linguistic demands discussed under section 1.1 above. For EFL students who are engrossed in learning English as well as academic content, challenges to lecture comprehension may come from a variety of sources. Comprehension

might be impeded due to an incomplete knowledge of the code. Besides, under-prepared students may perceive the speech rate as too high and abandon trying to understand. Good listeners use the following strategies to cope with the higher conceptual and linguistic demands of the lectures.

1.2.3.1 Attend to and recognise the macro structure of the lecture

Research (Tauroza & Allison1994, Young1994, Basham & Rounds1984, Lebauer1984) established that inability to recognize the macrostructure of lectures can hinder comprehension. Keeping up with higher speech rate, real or perceived, calls for quick processing of input. Anticipation is a vital strategy in this respect. Anticipating lecture input requires prior knowledge of the topic and the structure of the lecture (Watts1989). Hypotheses about upcoming text are also based on other types of knowledge: socio-linguistic (about the situation of communication), psycholinguistic (about the situation of communication), and cultural (about the community of the speaker). Listeners check their hypotheses by the recognition of cues from the text.

Listeners must identify, as soon as possible, the overall structure of the lecture that is going to help them anticipate discourse at the conceptual level. Meaning-based anticipation of lecture input may be more productive than focusing on form. Brown and Perry (1991:665) maintain that information processed at the semantic level may produce better memory retention than that processed at acoustical levels. Nonetheless, listeners can still resort to more form-based anticipation. A good representation of the overall structure of the lecture also supports the listeners' inferences about unfamiliar and ambiguous lexical and syntactic items.

1.2.3.2 Select key input to focus on

Many studies underscored the importance of selection in the process of comprehension (Chamot et al. 1988, cited in Cornaire1998, Rost and Ross 1991, cited in Cornaire1998). Selecting relevant content from lectures

represents a true challenge to EFL listeners. In Duda's (2000) words, "They often feel dissatisfied with their ability to separate central from peripheral information in the flow of discourse". Longer length in academic lectures and higher informational density impose bigger limits on listeners' ability to process and mentally retain information. Adopting a selective strategy with lecture input may be necessary. The formulation of a conceptual framework of the lecture enables the listeners to identify a hierarchy of relevance within the flow of information. Listeners must triangulate the status of information to retain all the relevant parts (see 1.2.4 Triangulation of the status of information below).

The lack of a selective strategy may account for frequent EFL listeners' complaints about informational density in lectures. Listeners may use filtering to ease the informational load by ignoring some information. Yet, Tauroza & Allison (1994: 35) warn that filtering can be overused or misused. The subjects' summaries used in their study contained frequent inappropriate omissions. The usefulness of selection and de-selection depends on the accuracy with which listeners make decisions about the content that should be learnt.

1.2.3.3 Use prior knowledge in the target subject matter

Several Researchers (Richards1983, Buck1999, Murphy1987, Chamot et al. 1988, cited in Cornaire1998, Rost and Ross 1991, cited in Cornaire1998) emphasise the role of prior knowledge in aural comprehension. Prior knowledge of the subject matter of the lectures can be of great value to students in academic settings. According to Buck, listeners with more knowledge about the subject matter may find texts easier to understand (Buck1999, Richards1983 and Weissberg1980). To illustrate, Mason (1994) and Benson (1989) observed that the majority of their subjects relied on their prior knowledge of the content of the lectures to enhance their understanding. They added and established relationships between new and prior knowledge.

Efficient listeners rely on their knowledge about the topic of the lecture to anticipate, select and comprehend similar or related content presented by the lecturers. Efficient listeners use knowledge from previous lectures as well as from other modules to comprehend new content. Some students would build prior knowledge in the target content following the lecturer's guidance, like course outline, by doing a concentrated study of reading materials (Mason1994, Flowerdew and Miller1992, cited in Flowerdew1994).

1.2.3.4 Use discourse, lexical and syntactic schemata to anticipate input

Besides prior knowledge about topic, many researchers (Richards1983, Powers1986, Hamp-Lyons1983 and Leki1991) posited the use of discourse, lexical and syntactic schemata in comprehension. Indeed listeners also use knowledge of the language (the sound system, vocabulary, grammar and the way longer discourse is structured), semantic and contextual knowledge about the situation in which speech is taking place (place, participants, etc.) and knowledge about the world to anticipate what might come next (Buck1999). Besides, Rost (1996) maintains that word and text schemata are necessary for the comprehension of extended texts. Efficient listeners identify elements in the discourse to activate existing schemata of lecture discourse.

According to Murphy (1987), competent listeners were found to use more frequently their knowledge of text structure. Using discourse schemata helps listeners anticipate moves like introductions, conclusions, exemplification, visual illustration, opportunity for interaction, etc. At a more local level, using lexical and syntactic schemata enables listeners to do a quick recognition of forms. According to Alderson (1977), recognition of related lexical items in the input will trigger familiar related knowledge structure (cited in Rost1996: 18). Schemata would speed the recognition and interpretation of the target input. In Rost's (1996: 50) terms, "When a hearer first recognizes a word, activation spreads to related words or concepts in the mental lexicon. The activation leads to faster recognition of these related words if they are presented

in the text". Therefore, listeners need not wait until a full analysis of the input is done to formulate hypotheses and representations about its meaning. They can use lexical collocation and syntactic patterns to anticipate the immediate discourse. In fact, listeners may even predict the word before it is uttered.

1.2.3.5 Integrate information incoming through other media

Lecture input consists of verbal content mainly. When dealing with dense lectures, efficient listeners seek help from available visual information. Actually, lecturers usually integrate visuals such as maps, graphs, pictures and board notes to assist their audience's comprehension. Exploiting visual information helps the listeners moderate the importance of words and reduce their dependence on verbal input. It provides an opportunity to make up for hearing problems and verify perceived verbal information.

1.2.3.6 Use survival lexical strategies

Still, academic lectures contain concepts expressed through words. Good listeners use two related strategies to cope with insufficient lexical knowledge. They may estimate the sense of unknown items. Deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context is a recognised efficient strategy (Richards1983, Rost1996 and Cornaire1998).

Listeners operate under time pressure to process speech sometimes with distracting factors such as background noise (Rost1996: 51-54). Besides, listeners may have to deal with errors, speed, phonetic reduction, etc. in the speech of lecturers. These factors cause listeners to mishear and misunderstand lexical items. Efficient listeners are able to compensate for imperfections at the level of auditory perception. They may make up for perceptual limitations by attending to other linguistic and extra-linguistic cues.

Rost (1996) and Reilly (1988) believe that listeners need also to be able to tolerate ambiguity in lexical items or lack of knowledge for some time so that not to panic or stop listening. Good listeners make plausible guesses, assume the most common sense of the lexical item or estimate its meaning from the speaker's cues and go on processing the incoming discourse. These guesses are continuously updated and revised (Rost1996: 51 also Reilly1988a). Efficient learners show a greater tolerance of ambiguity and willingness to take risk in the interpretation of input. Momentarily tolerating the unknown or the ambiguous may in fact be useful at conceptual levels as well. Listeners must move from attempting to understand all the input immediately to postponing aspects of non-understanding for possible later clarification.

Besides, according to Rost (1996), selection allows an acceptable construction of meaning from a partially heard signal. Listeners need to perform only a cursory examination of the acoustic signal. Selection received credit as one of the main functions in the comprehension process. Goodman (1967: 127) maintains that efficient language comprehension "…does not result from a precise perception and identification of all elements but from skill in selecting the foremost, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time." Developing selective attention as a listening strategy becomes a cognate of efficient listening.

In case these strategies prove insufficient, good listeners can still use socio-affective strategies to comprehend lectures (see discussion of monitoring and interaction below). Yet, in general, the use of the strategies discussed above will enable listeners to follow lectures despite conceptual and linguistic complexity. Efficient strategy users have better chances to comprehend lectures overcoming new vocabulary, unfamiliar accents, higher speed of delivery and frequent use of contracted speech.

1.2.4 Triangulation of the status of information

Simultaneously with the processes of selection and identification of propositional content, efficient listening to academic lectures calls for a quick assessment of the informational value of propositions in lectures. In other words, good listeners tend to decide, while listening, whether the information just heard would be useful to them for some purpose in the future. This task is critical to the students with regards to the higher length of academic lectures and their usually higher informational density. Six key strategies are generally used by efficient listeners to triangulate the informational value of propositions in lectures. These strategies are listed below.

1.2.4.1 Formulate a conceptual framework of the lecture

A piece of information has weight within an overall structure. It is relevant to the extent that it contributes to the main topic and sub-topics developed by the lecturer. Therefore, the most critical strategy and factor in the assessment of the value of information is formulating an appropriate conceptual framework of the lecture. Lebauer (1984); for instance, examined factors in lecture comprehension and found that EFL listeners' experience processing breakdowns when faced with the flow of information because they often fail to recognize the hierarchical structure of discourse and distinguish main from secondary points (1984: 41-43). Consequently, EFL listeners are often unable to synthesize the lecturer's communicative goal. Efficient listening requires keeping in mind the conceptual framework so as to assess the informational value of propositions in relationship to the topic as well as to other propositions.

1.2.4.2 Discern the lecturer's pragmatic intent

Researchers (Richards1983, Rost1996 and Cornaire1998) rightly point out that listeners have to infer the lecturer's communicative goal. Listeners should attend to phrases indicating the intent of the lecturers because it is

crucial for them to know whether the lecturer is stating information, making suggestions about how to treat that information, warning, setting tasks, giving instructions, advice or opinion, etc.

1.2.4.3 Attend & recognise non-verbal cues as markers of attitude and emphasis

Non-verbal cues such as tone (neutral, serious, joking or sarcastic), intonation, pitch, volume and pace provide valuable information about the lecturer's attitude towards different parts of the lecture. Listeners need to use these cues to infer what the lecturer intends to convey through the utterance. The lecturer's rise and fall of intonation, consciously or unconsciously, convey a message about the relevance of the propositions. Rost (1996:41-45) explains that stress is a major attentional signal that denotes prominence in a string of speech. In English, new items are often emphasised to signal their importance in the input. This suggests that listeners should attend to stressed items so as to comprehend relevant information. So do changes in other prosodic features such as pitch height and pauses. A marked pause, a slower pace and higher pitch all signal particular emphasis. Competent listeners make better use of non-verbal markers to assess the value of information and identify what lecturers want them to retain.

1.2.4.4 Interpret visual markers of emphasis

Lecturers often use support media to emphasise key information in their lectures. Notes on the board, points on OHP transparencies, drawings, pictures, maps, etc. mark important information in lectures. As mentioned in section 1.1, efficient listeners use these explicit markers of emphasis to assess the value of the input.

1.2.4.5 Recognise unnecessary information

Listeners must use both verbal and non-verbal markers to filter out unnecessary content. Efficient listeners are aware that lecturers may sometimes digress from the main topic of the lecture, use irony, rephrase the same

information, etc. Well-prepared listeners do not panic or waste time trying to understand their relevance.

1.2.4.6 Probing

At a higher level of processing, very competent listeners do not expect the lecturer's performance to be perfect. They are better able to identify imperfection when it occurs, which enables them to devise appropriate solutions (see a discussion of monitoring below). Of course, problems in lecture discourse may be identified only if the listener has at least a clear idea of the topic and the scope of the lecture in order to spot ambiguity and inconsistencies.

Actually, efficient listeners do an analysis of lecture input to construct a critical evaluation of it (Murphy1987, Cornaire1998, and Goss1982, cited in Cornaire1998). This is a higher level of processing which requires (developing) a critical attitude towards not only input and the lecturer's performance but also one's performance. This attitude underlies almost every other task and strategy in lecture comprehension especially b, c, and d above.

1.2.5 Synthesising Lecture Input

All the lecture comprehension tasks discussed so far aim at reconstructing relevant information from lectures. Once such information was identified, it must be retained because learning requires remembering. Synthesising meaning across propositions was identified by researchers (Lebauer1984, Hansen and Jensen1994) as a key aural comprehension strategy. This strategy helps reduce the load on the short term memory and gets the process of internalising the academic content under way. Synthesised input will assist comprehension of upcoming text by allowing the listeners to check coherence between different parts of the lecture.

Listeners need to permanently wonder whether the incoming information should be remembered or not. Good listeners let themselves be guided by the different types of emphasis markers discussed above (Section 1.1) to spot and retain the relevant information. After assessing the status of the information for the purposes of selection and de-selection, selected parts must be synthesised. This task is a critical step towards retaining new knowledge. Efficient listeners attempt to summarise content across propositions to reduce its length. This requires maintaining continuity of reference and the identification of relationships between propositions. Besides summarising, rephrasing the information is usually necessary to compact relevant content. Paraphrase signals a step forward from analysis of lecture input towards the targeted internalisation or long term retention of that input.

1.2.6 Monitoring one's comprehension

Given that any performance is subject to imperfections, listeners to academic lectures have to monitor their comprehension and refrain from taking the first comprehension for granted. A few researchers (Cornaire1998, Rost1996) underlined monitoring as an aural comprehension strategy. Rost (1996) posits that efficient listeners adopt a low-risk strategy by assuming that current understanding needs to be checked when appropriate. They stay alert to consistency and logic, probe and verify hypotheses made about lecture input. Listeners need to be able to identify problems of non-understanding.

While listening to academic lectures, students must particularly attend to ambiguity and contradictions in the lecturer's discourse (Rost1996). They also need to identify mishearing and incomplete hearing. Completing missing slots in comprehension can be done via inferences using lexical and syntactic schemata (see discussion of these above) or interaction with lecturers. Prior knowledge can indeed prove critical in compensating for deficiencies in aural

comprehension (Mason1994, Benson1989). Schemata help listeners fill in gaps of incomplete information that may be due to comprehension distracters like background noise, lack of attention, etc. Moreover, after word recognition, listeners can check what is heard to correct mishearing thanks to lexical knowledge.

Listeners must also monitor their choice of strategies. To illustrate, Brown & Yule (1983, cited in Tauroza & Allison1994: 45) posit that listeners follow a principle of local interpretation; they use information from the immediate context to interpret the text. When this principle fails, efficient listeners try to make inferences based on the wider context to attain a coherent interpretation which should be consistent with textual information. Efficient listeners are better at assessing the appropriateness of strategies and more willing to change strategy. Nevertheless, interaction may be a more viable solution when comprehension problems persist. Efficient listening consists of requests for repetition, explanation, rephrasing or (more) examples to check, complete or correct understanding and provide useful feedback to the lecturer. The use of this socio-affective strategy requires from the students knowledge of lecture hall conventions such as when and how to interact.

1.3 Lecture note taking

Learning from academic lectures calls for listening comprehension and note-taking skills. Lecture learning is closely linked to the ability of the students to take down notes that help them retain knowledge. The present section starts with a discussion of the role of note taking in the aural comprehension and learning from lectures. It then attempts to define the key tasks and strategies involved in taking notes from academic lectures. The last part is devoted to a description of indexes used in the evaluation of notes.

1.3.1 The Role of note taking in lecture comprehension

Note taking may be considered an integral part of the process of lecture comprehension. James (1977) supports this view and sees lecture comprehension as a process that culminates in note taking (1977, cited in Flowerdew1994: 11). Besides, as Chamot et al (1988, cited in Cornaire1998: 61) pointed out while working on learning strategies, good listeners most frequently use note taking. The process of note taking merges largely with the comprehension process. Actually, note taking depends greatly on comprehension because taking notes is essentially recording understanding.

As shown in General introduction above, there seems to be a general agreement among university students and lecturers about the importance of note taking as a study skill for academic studies. The present sub-section takes the discussion further to examine what the research community thinks of the effects of note taking on lecture comprehension and lecture learning. In what ways can note taking play a role in comprehension? This sub-section briefly presents two different views.

Note taking may facilitate learning from lectures in two ways according to Dunkel's (1988: 259): a- the 'encoding function' and b- the 'external storage' function. In her words, for the first function, note taking, as a process, may help "learning and retention of information by activating the learner's attentional mechanisms and their cognitive processes of coding, integrating, synthesising and transforming the oral input into personalized representations meaningful to the learners." As for the 'external storage' function, lecture notes represent an instrument for learners to store useful information. The latter may be used for review to assist students in recalling lecture content.

An important issue in understanding the lecture learning process relates to determining the function of note taking and the appropriate note taking method for lecture learning. There has been little research into L2 note taking and its role in lecture comprehension. A review of the literature about L1 note taking yielded mixed findings about the effect of taking notes on aural comprehension (Chaudron et al.1994: 78-79). A similar inconclusiveness of results characterise L2 studies (e.g. Dunkel 1988, Chaudron et al. 1994, Dunkel et al.1989). Research on note taking is still not conclusive about correlation between the quantity and quality of notes and lecture comprehension.

A number of reasons may account for the variability of the results about the function of note taking in the lecture comprehension process. These include, for example, the choice of competent subjects to focus on comprehension and take few notes. Further details on this issue can be found in Rost1996: 125 and Ganke1981, cited in Dunkel et al.1989: 545). The variability of study conditions may well be responsible for the variability of the results. Some studies involved pre-training in note taking given to the subjects beforehand (e.g. Chaudron et al.1994), while others did not. Effects may also be expected to be related to the review or non-review of lecture notes before the administration of the experimental lecture comprehension test. Besides, the type of the test measure utilized (comprehension questions, cloze, multiple choice questions, recall protocols, etc.) may contribute its own effect on the differing results. These factors affect lecture comprehension and its assessment and may vitiate the results yielded by studies on note taking.

On the basis of the reasons mentioned above and that might account for the inconclusiveness of research as well as the findings from studies that indicate that note taking has a positive effect on encoding lecture information, we shall assume that taking good notes is a efficient learning strategy for students than just listening. The listeners seem to be push to process the lecture

content, infer information from it, paraphrase and synthesise information in order to take notes. Dunkel (1988) concludes that " Taking lecture notes is widely accepted as a useful strategy for augmenting students' attention and retention of academic discourse…that [it] facilitates the process of learning and retaining of lecture material". Nonetheless, more research on note taking may be needed to illuminate the issue of the effect of taking notes on comprehending lectures.

There is more certainty, however, about another way in which note taking contributes to the students' learning from academic lectures; i.e. the external storage function. Note taking makes available to the students a record of their understanding of the content treated during lectures. This record supports lecture learning during review sessions of the notes.

1.3.2 Lecture note taking: Key tasks and strategies

The previous sub-section discussed two possible functions to lecture notes as regards lecture comprehension and lecture learning. Note taking may have a still debatable encoding function by helping listeners' comprehend lecture input. And it may be a readily useful record of lecture content. Both functions require note taking to be efficient. If Note taking does not help EFL students comprehend lectures, it must not become a hurdle by uselessly taking away precious time from the students' efforts to comprehend lecture content. The present sub-section describes the key tasks related to academic note taking. These tasks are divided into three phases; namely, taking notes while listening to lectures, editing and reviewing those notes. Key strategies required to enhance the quality of the notes and their usefulness are discussed in relation to their contribution to the tasks.

1.3.2.1 Taking notes from lectures

Note taking is a complex process because it rests upon aural comprehension of lectures as well as production of notations mainly on the basis of what was grasped from the lecture content. As the source of content that needs to be noted down essentially derives from the aural discourse of lectures, a good comprehension of lecture input is a sine qua non condition for any useful note taking to occur. Note taking also requires the use of some key strategies including selecting, paraphrasing and reducing lecture text by the use of symbols and abbreviations.

Efficient note takers use a selective strategy to note down important information (Benson1989: 436). Students should always wonder whether they need to remember and note down what lecturers are saying or not. This strategy is useful to focus on important information and filter out redundant examples, and less important or irrelevant metaphors, asides, jokes and so forth.

Efficient note takers use lecturer's cues to select useful information. In Benson (1989), the lecturers appeared to influence their students' note taking. The subject took more notes when the lecturers used meta-language to signal the importance of what is going to be said (pp 234-235). Lecturer's cues may include verbal signposting like 'This is important' or non-verbal ones like going to the blackboard to note down something (Fisk1982, cited in King1994: 223). Actually, note takers should be able to use all the verbal and non-verbal markers that signal importance of input (see section 1.1ove).

Visually displayed information is often crucial to lectures. King (1994) found that lecturers often indicate what the students are expected to do with the visuals. Lecturers either encourage the students to take notes (e.g. 'I want you to use this in your revision of these notes') or indicate that something is not worth noting (e.g. 'I don't think there is any need to take this down'). The

latter may be time-saving for students' note taking as students tend to invariably take down the visual information unless they are cued by the lecturers not to do so (King1994: 226). Fortunately for note takers, lecturers provide not only information but also assessment of the information as well for the purpose of helping the audience take good notes.

Lecturers can go a step further in helping students take notes. They sometimes provide outlines of lectures to assist the students in structuring their notes. Lecture outlines provided beforehand help ease the load related to identifying the organisation of the lecture and structuring the notes. During note taking, outlines represent a framework that note takers can fill in with relevant details.

Such lecture outlines are often not available and the students have to transcode selected lecture content on their own. Due to time constraints in lecture contexts, efficient note taking calls for a key strategy, i.e. reduction of the original input. Good note takers discard unnecessary text from the notes. Dunkel (1988) noticed that less efficient note takers write more structure words. She concluded her study of EFL note taking in these terms: "... some [EFL] students need practice in detecting and recording of information carrying words while simultaneously ignoring (for purposes of note taking) structure words and other syntactic elements (e.g. past tense markers) that do not add to the informational load, but increase the total number of notations placed in the notes." Verbatim note taking strategy during lectures is not a good strategy for encoding lecture content (Dunkel1988: 269-270). Some students may feel reassured by noting everything the lecturer says. But this strategy involves risks of note taking speed becoming much lower than the lecturer's speech rate. Besides, it may induce an absence of critical attitude vis-à-vis what is heard and what is noted down (Beddek2001: 84). Note takers must approach lecture input with a firm intention to select the most relevant parts and reduce notations so that note taking does not conflict with the aural comprehension of the lecture.

Time constraints and lecture length require the reduction of lecture input and minimising notations through summarising. Good note takers should be efficient listeners who are able to synthesise relevant lecture information while listening (see sub-section on synthesising meaning across propositions above). In her study of EFL note taking, Dunkel (1988:269-270) found that achievement on the test of lecture information recall was not related directly to the quantity of the notes. However, the terseness of notes, or encoding the informational content of the lecture in concise and compacted notations appeared better predictor of test performance. Compacting requires summarising the input using generally other words than those used by the lecturer. When analysing summary protocols produced by his subjects, Rost (1994:106) found out that the expert subjects used more paraphrasing in their summaries than the non-expert. Yet, considering that most of the students in their first and second year cannot be expected to be experts in note taking, paraphrasing lecture content should not engender loosing track of important information uttered by the lecturers. This deep level processing may prove difficult to occur during lectures due to time constraints.

Note terseness can, nonetheless, be achieved through the elimination of small words that are not essential to the information, such as the verb to be, articles, pronouns, etc. as well as the use of abbreviations and symbols. Dunkel (1988:88-89) contends that "appropriate use of abbreviations is likely to aid notes efficiency, and it did correlate highly with comprehension scores…" Nevertheless inappropriate use of abbreviated forms can be counterproductive. "Over-abbreviation or overuse of symbolic representations may have caused difficulty in retrieving the encoded information…". Indeed, lecture notes are helpful to students to the extent that the latter can decode the meaning of the abbreviations and symbols when editing and reviewing the reduced content of the lecture. The students must therefore use a coherent and consistent system of abbreviations and symbols.

The use of abbreviations and symbols can save a lot of valuable time. And to avoid the counterproductive effect of using abbreviations and symbols that they would not be able to understand later, students should be careful and consistent in the use of these aids to quick note taking. For instance, A student of linguistics should not use 'phon' as an abbreviation for phonetics as it can also stand for phonology. Wallace (1984) indicates that note takers can derive abbreviations from three categories:

- Field abbreviations are learnt as part of the study in a certain field. Students of chemistry, for instance, learn that C stands for carbon and Ca for calcium.
- Commonly understood abbreviations are both commonly used and easily understood across disciplines. '=' and 'i.e.' are commonly understood to mean 'equal to' and 'that is' respectively.
- Personal abbreviations are made by the students themselves. This type of abbreviations can be very useful in specific lectures in which a word or some words are frequently repeated.

(Wallace1984: 64)

It is noticeable from the previous categorization that abbreviations derive from the culture of learning in general, from the particular discipline as well as from particular speech events or situations. These three parameters seemingly would not give much credit to the idea of a fixed and universal system of abbreviations. Whatever abbreviations and symbols students choose to use, they would better be able to decode them quickly. Otherwise, these aids to efficient note taking would cease to be helpful and actually become a hindrance. Good systems of abbreviations and symbols should help note takers achieve a compromise between the need to attend to the lecture and the need to record selected information.

Selected lecture content should be put in a format that is most appropriate to the situation regarding available resources (handout of lecture outline, tables, diagrams or not). The students may be labelling, completing diagrams, adding details to outlines, highlighting on handouts or noting on

blank paper. In the latter situation, they may transcode lecture content in an outline format using differential numbering and indentation to show hierarchy, listing with margin notes or using concept maps similar to the one presented in Figure 1.1: An Example of the concept map format. Format must indicate relationships between pieces of information as well as relative hierarchy between them. The use of outlines or mapping forces the learners to evaluate material in terms of main idea, secondary ideas, details and irrelevancies. The procedure requires that relationships are identified and established, and irrelevant matters excluded.

Yet, the 'first-draft' notes can rarely be expected to take a completely orderly form. While listening to lectures, students have to respond to simultaneous demands related to aural comprehension and written encoding of lecture content. Under time pressure, note takers can face some problems like running out of time, missing some phrases or words, or having to cross or rewrite something. Hansen (1994:139) observed that extraneous information, i.e., unimportant information was mostly taken down at the beginning of the lecture. This may be due to hesitation about what constitutes good and relevant information in the lecture. Note takers need time to identify the overall structure and formulate a conceptual framework of the lecture.

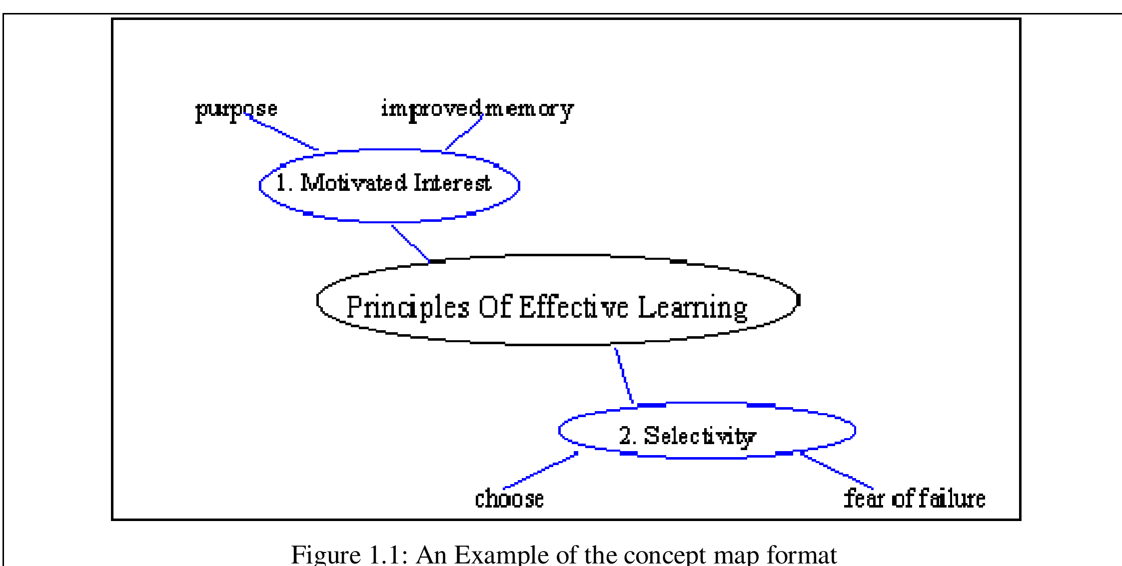


Figure 1.1: An Example of the concept map format
(source: © 1997 Learning Skills Programme, Counselling and Development Centre, York University)

In their efforts to structure their notes, the students should exploit the cues available in the discourse of lectures. Introductions and conclusions cue students on how to structure their notes. Introductions direct students in their predictions of the lecture structure and content; while, conclusions can serve to check structure as well as the completeness and accuracy of information noted down.

Efficient note takers monitor their performance while taking notes to ensure that their notes are complete and accurate. Questions, comments to oneself about unclear material, etc should be noted preferably on the margins. And for a better understanding of the nature and value of those notations, competent note takers mark them with symbols as those shown in Table 1.2: Some Symbols for Monitoring in Note Taking. Besides, note takers need to coordinate the shift back and forth from listening to lecturers to writing notes. Markers of unnecessary material like jokes, repetition, digression must be used to recognise phases that can be safely devoted to the note taking tasks.

Table 1.2: Some Symbols for monitoring in note taking
Source: http://slc.berkeley.edu/calren/notetaking1.html

Some suggested codes are:
? - not clear at time of lecture
Imp. or ! - important
Q - questions
* - assignment
C – comment (student's own) (Attempt to differentiate fact from opinion).

1.3.2.2 Editing lecture notes

Under time pressure and the need to simultaneously listen for comprehension, Students do not take notes in a perfect formal outline with all levels correctly parallel and complete. Hesitation is inherent in the process of

note taking. An intermediate stage of notes editing is usually necessary to organize the notes. In the following paragraphs, we shall examine strategies that enable the students improve the quality of their notes and probably increase their comprehension of the lecture.

Hamp-Lyons (1983:118) rightly remarks that re-writing the 'raw material' is an integral part of the note taking process. Editing lecture notes consists of rereading, expanding, omitting digressions and organizing the content. Learners should clear up missing or confusing information by counselling lecturers or classmates and reference books. They should take advantage of this phase to reconstruct or elaborate upon information stored in lecture notes. This is a view that integrates the encoding function of note taking and its external storage function as well.

Indeed, the process of rewriting lecture notes can be more interesting than mere re-writing. More encoding of lecture information may occur. Under lesser pressures from time constraints and concomitant demands (aural comprehension and note taking) and environmental distracters (e.g. background noise), students might make more efficient use of prior knowledge, better inferences and interrelating of the ideas and points. The students' representations of the lecture can grow clearer and more meaningful. Besides, good students take advantage of the opportunity to get assistance from other resources like reference books, handouts, peers, etc. They can pool, check and compare their notes with peers and complete missing notations, discuss and solve problems. These factors can be expected to lead the process of note taking to a better comprehension of lectures and more useful notes.

Editing notes is critical to the learning of lecture content. By reflecting on the meaning of the lecture (thinking about examples from their own experience or from readings to illustrate the main points), they make the material part of their own knowledge (hence integrating new information).

Testing the new information against one's experience and relating it to what one knows make such information more relevant and easier to retain.

1.3.2.3 Review of lecture notes

When they listen to lectures and take notes from them, students aim at learning content about literature, civilisation and linguistics. A good comprehension of the lectures and efficient notes may not be sufficient for the purpose of longer term learning to take place. Memory must be supported with timely review of the external store of lecture information: The notes.

Review of notes is believed to improve recall of lecture material (Aiken et al.1975, cited in Hansen1994: 131-132). It actually may have more benefits than a re-view of lecture information. Dunkel (1988:88 & 273). noted that note taking can have a delayed encoding function; "Several researchers have concluded that the encoding benefit of note taking actually accrues from having the opportunity to review notes…Encoding, in other words, may be facilitated when notes are reviewed." The first review session must come as soon as possible to benefit from information stored in memory before it is forgotten.

Students may use a number of strategies to make review sessions more fruitful. For example, constructing an outline from the notes promotes further encoding and retention. Key words and phrases should be selected and organised in a hierarchical structure of headings, sub-headings, detail points and examples. Another strategy consists in writing a summary of the notes using the key words and phrases. The manipulation of the notes in these ways calls for deeper understanding, an ability to assess informational value and recognise relationships. Students can make the notes and lectures more meaningful to them by looking for more personal examples and generate questions about the content.

1.3.3 Evaluating lecture notes

The note taking strategies discussed above help the students towards an efficient encoding of lecture content. The value of the notes essentially derives from their quality. How do researchers and instructors evaluate students' notes? What parameters are relevant to such evaluation?

Efficient note taking for both L1 and L2 learners was found to consist of large amounts of lecture content compacted into propositional type information units. These units contained abbreviations, symbols and drawings (Dunkel1988: 259-270). These components represent key indexes of efficient note taking.

The terseness of notes is another quality index. Yet the reduction of redundancy through over-abbreviation and over-symbolisation in note taking is feared to undermine the usefulness of notes as a store of lecture information (King1994 and Chaudron et al.1994). Notes need to be accurate and clear. They are of good quality only if months after their production, the students who produced them would still be able to retrieve lecture information from them. Handwriting too may be an index for note quality. Under time pressure, students may scribble notes that can prove illegible later. The same remark can be made about incomplete notes.

Methods used for the evaluation of note taking must integrate these indexes and any others to be found out by future research. Anderson (1980) formulated a model of discourse analysis which divides lecture content into information units. In the researcher's words, "an information unit equals the smallest unit of knowledge that can stand as a separate assertion and that can be judged true or false." (Cited in Dunkel & Davis1994: 61). Dunkel (1988) used Anderson's definition in a study of L2 note taking, to evaluate notes produced by her subjects. Her evaluation method consists of the following indexes:

- the total number of words (words, symbols, abbreviations, illustrations);
- the number of information units (using Anderson's (1980) definition above) ;
- the test answerability score, i.e. the number of test questions answerable from the notes;
- the completeness score, i.e. the total number of information units in the lecture by the total number of information units in the subject's notes; and
- the efficiency ratio, i.e. the total number of information units in the subject's notes by the total number of words in the notes.

(Dunkel1988: 265)

Dunkel's (1988) model includes a count of the quantity of notations. Care must be exercised in the interpretation of this index. The researcher concedes that when listeners perceive little or no content, note taking is reduced. The students' attitude towards note taking also influences their notes quality and quantity (Dunkel1988: 275). A sense of self-confidence and understanding makes note taking a less than necessary effort. Students who have a preference for note taking as a learning strategy might be expected to be more receptive to the utilization of this skill during lectures for learning purposes. Conversely, lower quality and especially lower quantity of notes may not necessarily be equated with lower note taking or/and comprehension ability.

Researchers certainly still need to find out more accurate criteria for the evaluation of notes quality and possibly refine the existing ones. Nevertheless, a number of interesting methods are used in evaluating note taking. For instance, Hansen (1994) suggests using topic analysis as a measure of note taking quality. This method involves comparing students' notes to transcripts of lectures (Hansen1994: 142). It appears to be a viable method of assessing the quality of the students' notes because a clear and available criterion is used; the lecture transcript. Besides, the analysis focuses on the most important aspect of academic lectures; namely, the topic.

A somewhat more elaborate system of notes quality indexes was used by Chaudron et al. (1994). The system integrates two more quality indexes: 'level of information' and a count of 'organisational features' (see Figure 1.2 below). Both additions are valuable to the assessment of the quality of lecture notes. 'Level of information' renders the relative value of topics and reflects the hierarchy of the lecture as conceived by the student. Whereas, organisational features, reflect a variety of relevant functions, hierarchy, clarity, focus, emphasis and terseness. We might need to reconsider a weak point, however, in Chaudron's indexes and Dunkel's as well. Both models integrate 'test wiseness' or the number of information units related to test items. Generally, lecture notes which appear as test items are selected along the parameters of importance and randomisation. There is, therefore, probably not sufficient ground for singling out such notes as a quality index. There is, so far at least, no identifiable language skill as test wiseness that can be taught, learnt and objectively evaluated.

Quantity

1. Total words can include abbreviations, symbols, etc. or these may be counted separately.
2. Total information units.

Quality

3. "Efficiency or density"
   a. Ratio of information units or ideas to total words
   b. Verbatim versus telegraphic or abbreviated forms
4. "completeness"
   Ratio of total information units or ideas in notes to main information units or ideas in text
5. "test answerability"
   Number of information units or ideas pertinent to test items
6. "Level of information"
   Number and proportion of high order information relative to low order from text
7. Organisational features:
   a. outlining
   b. diagrams
   c. symbols
   d. numbering
   e. evidence of examples
   f. titles

Figure 1.2: Measures of notes quality (Chaudron et al. 1994, p.81)

Rost's (1994) model on notes quality, which is shown in Figure 1.3: Rost's Note quality Indexes, integrates two new key parameters. In his analysis of his subjects' summaries of lecture content, he looked for evidence of inferences by the subjects. The analysis also took into account weaknesses in the notes especially omissions of main ideas and mishearing of words. This contribution from Rost makes the evaluation of notes more comprehensive and probably more accurate.

The indexes that have been considered so far for the assessment of the quality of lecture notes seem quite interesting and informative. More research is needed, however, to identify stronger indexes. Better evaluation might need to integrate yet other pertinent parameters like legibility of handwriting as an index of the retrievability of information, differential values of the components of note quality indexes (inclusion of main ideas is of higher value than mishearing of a word) and consistency in using abbreviations and symbols.

1. Content analysis:
- Inclusion and omission of main ideas;
- Mishearing of words; and
- Misunderstanding and partial understanding of ideas.

2. Style analysis:
- Reporting: reiterating/rephrasing selected propositions;
- Framing: making the overall structure of the lecture and its objectives explicit. It is a sign of inferencing as the listeners classifies ideas (e.g. "This part of the lecture deals with..");
- Embedding: presenting ideas in a hierarchical order based on inferences about the importance of ideas in the lecture;
- Non-embedding: no subordination (hierarchy) of ideas; and
- Self-monitoring: note takers report on what speakers are thinking of the lecture or their comprehension

Figure 1.3: Rost's note quality indexes (Rost1994: 98)

Whatever the methods used to evaluate the students' notes, the issue of defining what ought to be encoded from the lecture content proves quite complex. Indeed, it is difficult to define what is essential in a lecture in the light of the subjective interactional aspect of the situation. According to the listeners' goal for listening which depends, among other factors, on prior knowledge, listeners may vary, to some degree, about the hierarchy of content importance. What is familiar and easy to understand and recall for a listener may be new and worth noting down for another.

In conclusion, the present Review of the literature sustains the importance of lecture comprehension and note taking skills to academic studies, especially in lecture-based content modules. These skills can significantly enhance or impede academic learning. The review discussed major demands and difficulties of EFL students in the areas of aural comprehension of academic lectures and taking notes from these.

Section 1.1 above shows that academic lectures are complex learning events. Many overlapping and interacting components characterise their input. The students' comprehension of and learning from the lecture content itself particularly depend on the effect of such features as lecture discourse, especially discourse markers, the degree of conceptual and linguistic density of the lectures, the lecturers' accent and pronunciation, interaction and the use of support media.

Discourse markers are a particularly important feature of lecture discourse. Their presence may have positive effects on EFL lecture comprehension and note taking especially as academic lectures in the English Department often contain a highly dense discourse at the conceptual level. Non-native listeners have to cope with lectures that are dense with new literary, philosophical and linguistic concepts.

Academic lectures also exhibit a number of specific linguistic features. Lectures about literature in particular may make higher linguistic demands on EFL listeners. Lecturers may use lexical items that are unfamiliar to EFL listeners. Besides, lectures include comparatively longer and more complex syntactic structures. EFL listeners may experience comprehension problems when the lexical and syntactic load exceeds their processing ability.

Nevertheless, lectures include other components that may assist EFL listeners in coming to grips with conceptual and linguistic difficulties. Support media that accompany lecture content contribute to EFL listeners' lecture comprehension. Their role may prove yet crucial when verbal input increases in difficulty and listeners have to rely on other sources of information to enhance their aural comprehension and note taking.

The first section above shows how lectures make higher cognitive demands on listeners. These demands are particularly related to the learning of complex systems of ideas. Learning academic content must go through the initial process of comprehension. This review attempts to summarise key lecture comprehension and note taking strategies that were identified in the literature as helpful to the students in their efforts to learn efficiently from lectures.

Efficient listening is a complex process which requires active multi-level (semantic, syntactic, lexical) mental processing by listeners. Section 1.2 above describes the key tasks students have to complete and the strategies they need to use. Coping with the conceptual and linguistic demands, for instance, requires the identification of the overall hierarchical structure of the lecture. It also depends on other strategies such as anticipating discourse at conceptual levels, activating schematic organisation and maintaining the continuity of context. Listeners must identify the lecture topic, sub-topics and supporting details and formulate propositional meaning in the lecture. The comprehension

of aural input essentially consists of the identification of propositions and relations between them. This process requires the ability to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar key words and to infer implicit information.

Listeners should listen for transitional phrases which indicate the structure and focus of the lecture. Both verbal and non-verbal cues must be attended to because they point to emphasis and relevance of content. These cues include markers, body language, voice tone and pace, repetition, time spent on certain points, notes on the board and information presented via other media such as overhead projector, handout, etc.

Coping with the higher conceptual demands in academic lectures requires the listeners to mobilise their prior knowledge of the topic and representation of the overall structure of the lecture and of the general context to anticipate content. Efficient listeners start their comprehension and learning from lecture content well before the lecture during the phase of building prior knowledge. Course outlines, readings and assignments put the listeners on task for informed anticipation of upcoming lecture. The listener needs to attend to markers such as topic change phrases, board notes, etc. so as to predict the next point in the lecture to keep up with the speed of natural speech. Yet, hypotheses about up-coming content must be checked against the input itself.

Aural comprehension of lectures calls for selection of relevant content. Listeners have to assess the value of informational content in lectures to retain important parts. Efficient listeners make the most of available title, lecture outline, introductory statements, which usually mark the most relevant parts of lectures. Successful comprehension of also requires listeners to monitor their performance and approach lecture input critically to ensure that information selected for retention is valid. Selected information need to be synthesised through summarising and paraphrasing. Synthesising lecture information fosters better mental retention and paves the way for efficient note taking.

Students who attend lectures and use listening strategies to achieve better comprehension of the lecture content also need to use good note taking strategies. Note taking is a hunt for useful information. The ability to take efficient notes from academic lectures calls for the use of a number of strategies. Efficient note takers detect major points in lectures by identifying a variety of cues embedded in lecture discourse. Lecturers usually provide such cues as longer pauses as boundaries for ideas, repetition for emphasis, meta-linguistic markers to introduce major points and board notations to assist the audience with their note taking task.

An efficient and systematic approach to taking, editing and reviewing lecture notes contribute to learning academic content. Competent note takers use a variety of strategies especially selection, reduction and monitoring to take down comprehensive and accurate notes. They let themselves be guided by discourse markers to identify relevant information. They make use of symbols and abbreviations to cope with the speed of delivery. But risks of unintelligibility of notes accrue from inappropriate utilization of these. Accuracy of the information noted down is vital to lecture learning. Note editing should improve the value of the notes. Students should make changes in the notes (correct, add or delete notes, rephrase and reorganise points and mark relationships between them) to ensure that they are complete and understandable. Finally, the review of the notes contributes to the long term retention of the lecture content; i.e. learning.

Research is still needed to establish the positive effect of note taking on lecture comprehension. Nonetheless, the least we are sure of is that inefficient note taking impedes comprehension as it increases the cognitive load on listeners. Spending time transcribing irrelevant and unimportant content does interfere with the already demanding processing of oral input. Note taking, then, is an essential study skill for students learning intensively from lectures. Besides, the notes certainly hold value for students as an external store.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODS & PROCEDURES

Chapter two: Methods & procedures

The present study investigates lecture comprehension and note taking strategies of second year students in the English Department. This chapter describes the study in four sections. The first section is devoted to the presentation of the research questions. Then, the sampling of the subjects is discussed and the research design is described. The last section presents the procedures used to implement the design.

2.1 The Research questions

The research design was constructed to gather data to inform the main research question which is the following: Do the second year students in the English Department have adequate lecture comprehension and note taking ability that is essential for learning from academic lectures?

The rationale for this research (General introduction) substantiated the role of academic listening and note taking in university studies. The preliminary survey with some teachers in the English Department pointed to note taking and listening comprehension as possible causes of academic underachievement in the English Department. We needed to investigate the second year students' ability in these two skills.

Seven questions underlie the main research question of the present study. They are as follows:

Question 1: How do the subjects perform in a test of key lecture comprehension strategies?

Question 2: Do the subjects actually *use* efficient lecture comprehension strategies?

Question 3: How do the subjects perform in a lecture note taking task?

Question 4: Do they use key efficient note taking strategies?

Question 5: If the subjects are not using efficient strategies, is instruction contributing to this state of affairs? In other words, does instruction in the Department of English provide for adequate training in lecture comprehension and note taking?

Question 6: Does the curriculum in the English Department provide for the development of the students' lecture comprehension and note taking ability?

Question 7: The wider issue of the research is learning from the lectures in the English Department. A related question is the following: Do lectures in the English Department contain features that would assist the students in their effort to comprehend their content and record it in notes?

2.2 The Subjects

Second year students were sampled as the subjects to be investigated for a number of methodological reasons. The most significant reason is that after two years of training in listening, an evaluation of the students' lecture comprehension and note taking is objectively more appropriate and fair. Objective evaluation requires allowing sufficient time for students to build the skill areas under investigation. Another reason is that second year students are a more homogenous group as they had the same teacher of listening comprehension during both their first and second year of study in the English Department. And they received the same instruction in aural comprehension during these first two years of EFL learning (university listening instruction is discussed under Analysis of the current instruction in listening comprehension and note taking below).

The Subjects' average age was 20, ranging between 18 and 25. All were Algerian students studying EFL for occupational and academic purposes. Participants also included lecturers and teachers of listening comprehension from the English Department of the University of Blida. For the sake of a tentative comparison with other departments of English, three listening instructors from the English department of the University of Algiers were surveyed.

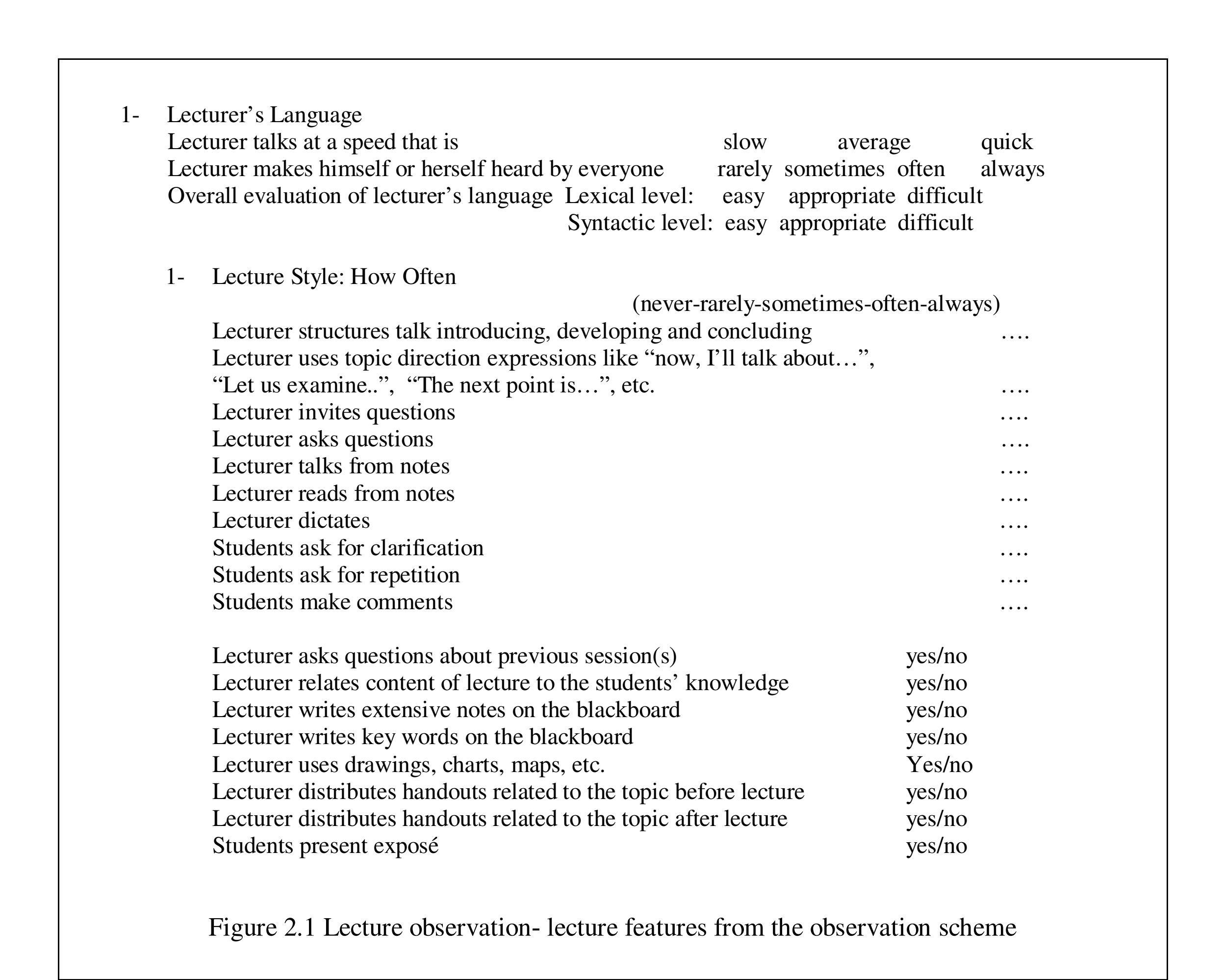
2.3 The Research design

The design which was constructed to inform the present research draws upon self-report, discourse analysis and psychometric research methods. Five research instruments were used to inform the research questions. These are observation of lectures, the Test of Lecture Comprehension, the subjects' lecture notes, the questionnaire and the current instruction in listening comprehension.

2.3.1 Observation of lectures

The observation of authentic content lectures in the English Department has a two-fold objective. The primary goal consists in gathering data about the features of lectures to which the subjects are exposed. The observation was also used to extend insights about the subjects' note taking strategies. The data collected from the observation in combination with the questionnaire responses about lecture style describe the subjects' learning milieu. Such description is needed to help us make a more accurate assessment of the strategy requirements that students need to fulfil in order to learn efficiently from academic lectures in the Department of English.

The researcher prepared a real time observation scheme to code verbal, paralinguistic and non-linguistic features of the observed lectures (see Figure 2.1: Lecture observation- lecture features from the observation scheme). The classroom observation of lectures focused on pre-selected characteristics and categories inspired by the characterisation of academic lectures presented in the Review of the Literature under section 1.1.The Academic lecture. The observation scheme consists of categories related to the lecturer's language in terms of speed of delivery, voice projection and linguistic level. Observers can also code the lecturers' non-verbal information (intonation, facial expressions, and gestures for emphasis), notations on the blackboard, and the students' contribution to the discourse of the lectures (questions, clarification requests, comments, etc.). Lecture discourse is further characterised along some key parameters such as rhetorical signalling, lecturer's use of visual support and provision of handouts.



1- Lecturer's Language

Lecturer talks at a speed that is	slow	average		quick
Lecturer makes himself or herself heard by everyone	rarely	sometimes	often	always
Overall evaluation of lecturer's language Lexical level:	easy	appropriate	difficult	
Syntactic level:	easy	appropriate	difficult	

1- Lecture Style: How Often

	(never-rarely-sometimes-often-always)
Lecturer structures talk introducing, developing and concluding	….
Lecturer uses topic direction expressions like "now, I'll talk about…", "Let us examine..", "The next point is…", etc.	….
Lecturer invites questions	….
Lecturer asks questions	….
Lecturer talks from notes	….
Lecturer reads from notes	….
Lecturer dictates	….
Students ask for clarification	….
Students ask for repetition	….
Students make comments	….

Lecturer asks questions about previous session(s)	yes/no
Lecturer relates content of lecture to the students' knowledge	yes/no
Lecturer writes extensive notes on the blackboard	yes/no
Lecturer writes key words on the blackboard	yes/no
Lecturer uses drawings, charts, maps, etc.	Yes/no
Lecturer distributes handouts related to the topic before lecture	yes/no
Lecturer distributes handouts related to the topic after lecture	yes/no
Students present exposé	yes/no

Figure 2.1 Lecture observation- lecture features from the observation scheme

Two observers carried out the observation of two regular lectures delivered to second year students in May 2001 (a couple of weeks ahead of the final regular exams). The researcher attended a lecture about United States literature and a lecturer from the English Department observed a lecture in English literature. Both observers used the same lecture observation scheme.

2.3.2 The Test of lecture comprehension

A test was constructed the researcher for the purposes of the present study in order to get first hand data about the subjects' ability to comprehend academic lectures. The Test of Lecture Comprehension assesses the subjects, second year students' classes of the years 2001 and 2002, directly on a selected number of key strategies.

2.3.2.1 Test of lecture comprehension - description

The Test of Lecture Comprehension is an objective test. In this section, we shall describe the content and format of the test. The choices for these are explained. And potential threats to its validity and reliability are considered. Concerning content, the initial task in constructing the test of lecture comprehension consisted of selecting the lecture comprehension strategies that were to be tapped. Section 1.2 provides a taxonomy of key strategies that can be objectively tested.

As for format, the Test of Lecture Comprehension uses multiple-choice as a salient item format. Table 2.1: The Test of lecture comprehension-elicitation and response mode/format summarises the elicitation and response modes and item format used in the test. For all the items, one elicitation and response mode was used; i.e., writing.

Table 2.1
The Test of lecture comprehension- elicitation/response mode and format

Test Version n°	Item n°	Elicitation Mode	Elicitation Format	Response Mode	Response Format
1	1	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
1	2	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
1	3	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
1	4	written	Jumbled points	written	Put the points in outline form
1	5	written	MCQ (15) words	written	Rewrite five key words
2	1	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
2	2	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
2	3	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
2	4	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
2	5	written	MCQ (15) words	written	Rewrite five key words
3	1	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
3	2	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
3	3	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
3	4	written	Jumbled points	written	Put the points in outline form
3	5	written	MCQ (15) words	written	Rewrite five key words
4	1	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
4	2	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
4	3	written	Open MCQ	written	Circle or add the right response
4	4	written	Jumbled points	written	Put the points in outline form
4	5	written	MCQ (15) words	written	Rewrite five key words

Key: MCQ = Multiple choice question

Four versions of the test were designed to be used with different groups of the testees. Each version consists of five closed or semi-closed-ended items (mainly multiple choice question, also used by Dunkel et al. 1989 for instance). The four versions of the test are under Appendix C. It should be mentioned here that any test of lecture comprehension especially if similar authenticity standards are sought (within the time span of one regular exam) could not assess all or even most of lecture comprehension strategies. These test items could at best tap a sample of the most important components of the test criterion construct; i.e. lecture comprehension strategies as characterised in the Review of the literature (see Section 1.2).

Section 1.2 above outlines the salient strategies in the aural comprehension of academic lectures. These strategies form the criterion competence of the Test of Lecture Comprehension. Table 2.2: The Test of

lecture comprehension- tested strategies by test version shows the strategies assessed by the Test of Lecture Comprehension. Beside their importance to lecture learning, the selected strategies present the methodological advantage of being amenable to objective assessment. For instance, using the introduction to predict the overall structure of lectures lends itself better to evaluation by an objective test than say monitoring one's comprehension.

Table 2.2
Tested strategies by test version

Strategies	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9
Test Version									
Version1	Task1	Task4		Task3	Task5			Task2	
Version2	Task1		Task2		Task5	Task3			Task4
Version3	Task1	Task4	Task2		Task5		Task3		
Version4	Task1	Task4		Task3	Task5		Task2		
Totals	4	3	2	2	4	1	2	1	1

Key:

S1: Attending to the introduction to predict the overall structure of the lecture
S2: Recognizing the overall structure of the lecture
S3: Predicting topic change
S4: Using markers to identify topic change
S5: Recognising key words
S6: Inferring implicit meaning
S7: Guessing the meaning of unknown words
S8: Synthesizing meaning across propositions
S9: Identifying the attitude of the speaker

The input text of the Test of Lecture Comprehension consists of lectures delivered by the researcher. Four lectures were selected from the second year program of British Civilisation. They presented expositions about themes in British history; namely, The Victorian Age, The Industrial Revolution, The Age of British Imperialism and The Motives of British Imperialism. The transcripts of these lectures can be read under Appendix D. These lectures provided authentic input for the participant to learn from. The length of the lectures ranged from twenty to thirty minutes. This length fitted with the amount of time available in a regular examination. Finally, no semantic adjustments, such as changing vocabulary or simplifying the text, were made in order not to affect the authenticity of the text.

2.3.2.2 Test of lecture comprehension - procedure

The Test of Lecture Comprehension was administered twice at the end of academic years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002. In 2001, the whole group of second year students (n = 152) took the test. The following year, however, the number of second year students doubled. And two teachers consequently taught them listening comprehension. The test was therefore administered to the students (n = 148) who were taught by the teacher of listening comprehension who had taken part in the first test administration. The replication of the test with the 2002 second year students was, with other safeguards, intended to verify the reliability of the test.

Both administrations of the test took place over two to three days because of practical constraints (the availability of the language laboratory, the subjects' availability and the researcher's fatigue). The subjects were divided into six groups in 2001 and eight in 2002. They sat for the test in May in a language laboratory, in conditions similar to regular exams of listening comprehension. Actually, they took the Lecture Comprehension Test as the second regular examination of listening comprehension.

The same interest in reducing intervention and treatment motivated the sequencing of the questionnaire *after* the Test of Lecture Comprehension and not before. A reverse order would have led to the questionnaire unduly raising the subjects' consciousness about lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. The administration of the questionnaire itself represents a sort of introduction to how to listen to lectures and take notes. The test results would have then been distorted by the mere sequence of the two research tools.

All test directions were given orally. Extreme care was taken to ensure that all the subjects understood what they were expected to do. The directions were explained in simple words at a markedly slow pace and with a good voice

projection. They were not in principle to be repeated for the sake of procedural authenticity. Nevertheless, occasionally subjects would ask for directions to be repeated and the researcher responded positively.

For the sake of meeting authenticity requirements, directions for completing the tasks were not given in advance in order to approximate authentic lecture settings (post listening tasks). Lecturers do not usually give their teaching in forms similar to the listening course tasks. The audience has to do with the implicit instruction of attending to learn from the lectures and the text built-in emphases, direction markers, etc. The test papers containing the test tasks to complete were given just before the completion of the first task. After completion time elapsed, the subjects were instructed to turn over the test papers and the lecturer would proceed delivering the rest of the lecture.

Prior to the test, the subjects were informed that they were allowed to take notes (but not instructed to do so). A doubled sheet of paper usually used as answer sheet in regular examinations was distributed to serve as notepaper. The time allowed for the completion of test tasks ranged from five to eight minutes for the first three tasks. After the completion of these, the first sheet of the test paper was collected. A second sheet containing test tasks four and five was distributed later. Ten to fifteen minutes were allowed for the last two items; namely, lecture outline and key words.

The subjects listened to one lecture in British civilisation. The researcher himself, who had been lecturing in linguistics for five years in the English Department, delivered the lectures. The researcher read aloud from transcripts of actual lectures. To the best of his awareness and ability, the researcher tried to keep the delivery of the lecture as natural as possible. Naturalness of delivery should be allowed to include, among other things, a slowdown of speech rate and repetition when the audience displays signs of difficulty with the content of the lecture. But the pace was monitored lest it becomes low enough to allow or

induce a `dictation mood`. Globally, as perceived by the researcher, the speech rate was a little slower than usual. Unfortunately, the quantification of the speech rate could not be done for lack of appropriate equipment. Finally, the delivery of the lectures was stopped at five points to allow the researcher to give test directions and the testees to complete the test tasks.

The lecture was delivered only once just like in actual lecture halls. This condition imposed limits on the number of items that could possibly be included in the test. The number of five was found optimal because workable as every task came up about five to ten minutes after the previous one. The pacing allowed all the testees to complete the test tasks within the allotted time.

2.3.3 Analysis of the subjects' lecture notes

The Test of Lecture Comprehension attempted to assess the subjects' ability levels on nine key lecture comprehension strategies. Direct data were needed about the ability of the subjects to take notes from academic lectures. Notes taken by the subjects from the lectures delivered during the Test of Lecture Comprehension were analysed. The analysis aimed at documenting the subjects' note taking ability. The data were cross-checked against the questionnaire responses to questions about the subjects' note taking strategies. The analysis was extended to a randomly selected sample of notes taken by eight subjects from the lecture that was observed by the researcher in the framework of this study (see Lecture observation above).

Note papers were collected from the 2001 subjects who took versions three and four of the Test of Lecture Comprehension. Forty nine papers were handed in (26 of version 3 and 23 of version four). The choice of versions was random. In order to do an in-depth qualitative analysis, a smaller sample

of seventeen note papers (eight from version three and nine from version four) was defined according to grades obtained by the subjects on the Test of Lecture Comprehension, the listening module and combined content modules. The note takers with grades closest to the highest, lowest, average and mode values within the 2001 population in each parameter were selected (see Table 2.4-The Subjects' lecture notes: sampling of the test of lecture comprehension note takers for note quality analysis). The strata based sampling is meant to allow examining lecture note taking of subjects who represent as well as possible the target population.

Table 2.4

The Subjects' lecture notes:
Sampling of the test of lecture comprehension note takers for note quality analysis

	Note takers of version 3 of the test of lecture		Note takers of version 4 of the test of lecture comprehension		2001Population
Grades on Listening Comprehension	Lowest (S461) *	46.25	Lowest (S713)	30	30
	Highest (S412)	76.25	Highest (S916)	80	86.25
	Mode (S376)	65	Mode (S645)	65	65
	Average (S569)	55	Average (S378)	56.25	55.7
Grades on Content Modules	Lowest (S427)	37.4	Lowest (S820)	20.45	16.75
	Highest (S905)	69.65	Highest (S916)	74.5	74.5
	Mode (S569)	61.25	S769	57.05	58
	Average (S379)	47.55	S824	48.05	46.5
Grades on Test of Lecture Comprehension	Lowest (S718)	12	Lowest (S820)	5	5
	Highest (S412)	68	Highest (S703)	77	77
	Mode (X)	X	Mode (X)	X	X
	Average (S461)	39	Average (S915)	36	35.5

Key:

- (S 000) *= an identification reference number for the subjects.

A final word in this discussion goes to the sampling of the note takers. A grade comparison was carried out to check the validity of the sampling (stratificational for the subjects who took notes from the lectures used as input for the Test of Lecture Comprehension and random for those who attended the observed lecture). Tables 2.5 A and B below present a grade comparison for the note takers. The grades and averages obtained by the sample on first and second year listening modules, the combined content modules and the combined language modules along the scores on the Test of Lecture Comprehension were compared to those of the total population of subjects. The analysis shows that almost all the scores and averages of the sample are located within 50% of the total population's standard deviation. This suggests that the sample of note takers is quite representative of the whole population of subjects.

Table 2.5 A
The Subjects' lecture notes-
the sampling of the test of lecture comprehension note takers

n = 18	Lis1 S	Lis1 P	Lis2 S	Lis2 P	Con1 S	Con1 P	Con2 S	Con2 P	LeCTest S	LeCTest P	Lge2 S	Lge2 P
M	42.29	34.74	58.40	55.60	47.94	43.33	52.07	46.52	38.56	34.60	57.52	54.41
SD	12.54	12.67	13.87	10.84	13.15	11.91	12.91	10.39	20.64	16.77	11.65	9.85
Median	43.75	32.50	60.00	55.00	49.00	43.75	50.10	46.30	34.50	33.00	58.73	55.30
DPSD %	59.63		25.89		38.66		43.00		23.59		31.53	

Key: M = mean SD = standard deviation
S = Sample (Note Takers of the Test of Lecture Comprehension) P = Population (the Testees)
DPSD = Distance of sample average from the population's average relative to the population's standard deviation

Table 2.5 B
The Subjects' lecture notes- the sampling of the observed lecture note takers

n = 8	Lis1 S	Lis1 P	Lis2 S	Lis2 P	Con1 S	Con1 P	Con2 S	Con2 P	LeCTest S	LeCTest P	Lge2 S	Lge2 P
M	42.5	34.7	58.1	55.6	43.7	43.33	46.3	46.52	32.13	34.6	56.04	54.41
SD	13.43	12.7	9.43	10.8	14.7	11.91	7.48	10.39	12.52	16.77	9.21	9.85
Median	50	32.5	57.5	55	49	43.75	47.9	46.3	32	33	56.4	55.3
DPSD %	61.27		23.3		3.32		0		14.75		16.52	

Key:
S = Sample (Note Takers of the Test of Lecture Comprehension) P = Population (the Testees)
DPSD = Distance of sample average from the population's average relative to the population's standard deviation

The evaluation of the subjects' notes draws on the content of section 1.2 above. This section outlines a number of significant contributions to the assessment of the quality of academic notes (Dunkel 1988, Rost 1994, and Chaudron et al. 1994). A note quality checklist (see below) was devised that synthesises the most relevant and practical parameters of good note taking. Figure 2.2 below presents the four key parameters; namely, the number and quality of information units in the notes, the use of organisational features, the completion and the efficiency of the notes.

- Number and quality of information units (propositions) noted down allotted differential grade value (M1: 3 points, M2: 2 points; S: 1 point, E: 1 point, D: -1 point);
- Organisational Features, their quantity and quality (clarity of meaning and consistency)
- Outlining: Making explicit macro structure and embedding (hierarchy);
- Abbreviations, their quantity and quality (clarity of meaning and consistency);
- Diagramming;
- Numbering;
- Symbols, their quantity and quality (clarity of meaning and consistency);
- Titling;
- Evidence of examples;
- Highlighting: indenting, underlining, circling, etc.;
- Note Completeness: The total information units in the testee's notes by the total number of information units in the test lectures.
- Note Efficiency: The informational value of the subject's notes (total of information units with differential score value) by the notational number, i.e. the number of notations in the notes.

Figure 2.2: The Subjects' lecture notes- note quality checklist
(Adapted from notes quality indexes by Rost1994, King1994, Chaudron et al.1994, Anderson (1980 cited in Dunkel & Davis1994: 61) and Hansen 1994)

The following step in the evaluation of the subjects' notes consisted of categorising the content of the lectures used as test input and against which the notes were later examined. Test lectures three and four were analysed into propositional units. These units were labelled M1, M2, S, E or D which respectively stand for main idea, low main idea, secondary idea, example and digression. Then, we analysed the subjects' notes. The notations were classified into content words, structure words, illegible and mishearing. The notations used in the test items and copied by the subjects were marked and counted out. And so were attempts by the subjects to answer the test items on the notepaper.

In an attempt to take into account the complexity of note quality, as many components available as possible were integrated into the note quality grade. The notes' efficiency score was added up to notes' completeness scores. Besides, the subjects' organisation of their notes was assessed according to a grid (see Figure 2.2 above: The Subjects' lecture notes- note quality checklist) that takes into consideration the differential contribution of each organisational tool to the overall quality of the notes. Overall, organisational features (like outlining) took a higher-grade value because they not only make notations readable and information more easily retrievable, but also indicate hierarchy within the informational content. Finally, instances of mishearing and illegible notations were subtracted from the notes' quality score. In brief, the best note taking is the most efficient and preferably as complete as possible. It is set in the clearest layout possible and shows levels of relevance (hierarchy).

As for the notes taken by the subjects from the observed lectures, the evaluation process took a slightly different form because, unlike the test lectures, a transcript of the input lectures was not available. Nevertheless the same note quality parameters presented in the checklist above were also applied to the evaluation of these notes. The notes taken by the researcher/observer served as expert's notes against which the subjects' notes were evaluated. The notes quality value was calculated as follows: The notes' completeness was added to the notes' organisation and the whole was divided by two. The notes' completeness score included the number of propositional units reported (1 point), partially reported (1/2 point), misreported (-1 point) and appropriate elaboration (1 point), and inclusion of redundant repetition or aside (-1). While organisation mainly consisted of 80 % of the value going to organisational features such as outlining (10 points), topicalising (5 points), etc. and 20% of the grade to terseness of the notes (symbols 10 points and abbreviations 10 points).

2.3.4 The Survey questionnaires

The Test of Lecture Comprehension and the analysis of the subjects' lecture notes generated data about the performance of the subjects in aural comprehension and note taking tasks. These tools were supplemented with a survey questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire was used to crosscheck and complete data gathered from from the Test and the subjects' notes.

Some strategies that could not practically be tapped by performance tests, like the role and use of prior knowledge in comprehending lecture content are explored by items in the questionnaire. This choice of introspective methodology to access lecture comprehension is suggested, if not made necessary, by the absence of more direct instruments. Learners may have important insights into their mental processes that they could share with researchers (Cohen et al. 1981 and Light & Teh-Yuan 1991). The questionnaire can therefore be a useful tool to get a fuller picture of the subjects' lecture comprehension and note taking abilities.

2.3.4.1 Description

Three versions of the questionnaire were designed to address three sub-groups of respondents. One version of the questionnaire was prepared for second year students. The second version was designed to address teachers of listening comprehension. This version targets especially data about instruction in listening comprehension. The third version was meant for lecturers.

The questionnaire consists of a number of closed items (The Students' Questionnaire: 85 items; The Listening Teachers' Questionnaire: 78 items; The Lecturers' Questionnaire: 77 items) and three open-ended items. The

respondents were expected to tick one of five scales representing fixed alternatives about the following areas:

- The frequency of the students' use of key lecture comprehension and note taking strategies,
- Teaching practices in the English Department as related to lectures and listening instruction;
- The degree of effect of some factors especially the students' lecture comprehension and note taking strategies on their lecture comprehension; and
- Ratings of the students' ability levels on some lecture comprehension and note taking strategies.

The frequency basis for eliciting introspective data acknowledges the relativity of phenomena related to human beings. Understanding, use of strategies and classroom practices can be more informatively described in terms of frequency than via such dichotomies as "yes/no".

Risks of subjectivity with self-report methodology accrue from fluctuation and inaccuracy of self-rating instruments. When scales move abruptly from 'good' to 'weak' points, they do not allow for intermediate value points. This deficiency may account for the face-saving cluster of responses under scale 'good'. Grossly formulated questions and rating scales may amplify risks of subjectivity and inaccuracy. Discrepancies between respondents may be blurred and sometimes, the 'safety-drive' towards face-saving and neutral responses may be reinforced.

Caution was exercised in the phrasing of the questionnaire items and their ordering so as not to give the respondents the slightest indication about the value (positive or negative) of strategies and factors involved in lecture comprehension and note taking. Items that present opposing options like using a systematic or a non-systematic system of abbreviation are spaced to prevent

leading the respondents to give the response that might look as 'face-saving' or 'appropriate'. Alternating positive and negative categories and ensuring anonymity of questionnaire respondents reduce risks against truthfulness, as the items would present little overt threat to the face. It is noteworthy, here, that the repetitious items throughout the different sections of questionnaire are meant to check any inconsistency in the respondents' answers.

In order to sustain the respondents' attention and interest for the sake of greater accuracy, the number of items was kept to an optimal level. Indeed, many items had been dropped from the first version of the questionnaire that consisted of 150 items. The reduction of the number of items took place after the monitoring phase. The trial version of the questionnaire had been cross-examined by colleagues and tried out with a third year student.

The questionnaire items that were retained after the monitoring phase were set in three major sections. The questionnaire opens with the largest section which consists of three frequency item questions:

- How often do you/students …? (eliciting data about note taking and lecture comprehension strategies used by the subjects);
- How often do the lecturers …? (eliciting data about characteristics of lectures in the English Department as perceived by students and lecturers); and
- How often do the listening teachers …? (eliciting data about listening instruction from students and teachers of listening comprehension)

The second section of the questionnaire proceeds with items introduced by the expression: "State the effect of … on lecture comprehension". These items elicit the respondents' attitudes and meta-linguistic knowledge about lecture comprehension and note taking. Finally, the last section elicits ratings of the subjects' lecture comprehension and note taking abilities via the cue: "How do you evaluate your/the students' ability to …?"

The provision for a face-to-face, interview-like questionnaire may have sustained interest and helped working out comprehension problems. This format may actually have tempered careless responding. Measures that may minimise measurement errors in using rating scales include providing assistance to the subjects in using the scale, limiting the number of items, and defining as clearly as possible degrees of assessment (gradations). Minimal production by the subjects was opted for, among other reasons, fears that efforts to verbalise by the subjects may distort self-report on underlying cognitive operations. Besides, ticking desired responses presents the other benefit of allowing an objective quantification of responses.

The interview-like questionnaire employed in the present study also offers anonymity and allows checking accessibility and clarity. The large number of respondents probably reduces possible bias in the data that could possibly come from sampling deficiencies; it may as well enhance the relevance of the data to bigger populations within the English Department.

2.3.4.2 Procedure

The Students' Questionnaire was distributed to the subjects during a meeting in a lecture hall. 144 subjects (84 from the 2001 class and 60 from the 2002 class) completed the Students' Questionnaire. Deliberate attendance of the meeting stood as the randomisation factor. Directions about how to complete the questionnaire were given after the subjects had been briefed about the nature and the objectives of the study. The researcher explained how the study aimed at improving the students' learning. This may have increased their involvement and cooperation. Requests for clarification were invited and the subjects were assured of confidentiality. The researcher explained terms and rephrased questions when appropriate.

The Faculty Questionnaire, on the other hand, was distributed to 21 teachers. 18 questionnaires were returned. Six teachers completed the version designed for listening teachers (three of whom are from the University of Algiers). 12 teachers completed the second version meant for lecturers. The teachers who returned the questionnaire were senior and junior. A few held postgraduate degrees. Most of them had an English degree usually with more than five years of teaching in the English Department.

2.3.5 Analysis of instruction in listening comprehension and note taking in the English department

In the previous sections, the subjects' lecture comprehension and note taking strategies were investigated by psychometric and self-report research instruments. In order to triangulate these strategies further and particularly to check whether the subjects received adequate training in the skills under study, the last research task consisted of analysing the listening instruction in the English Department. The analysis covered course notes from subjects. The data is supplemented and compared to data from the questionnaire sections that probe into listening instruction.

The description of the current instruction in listening comprehension is useful to indicate, on objective parameters, the degree to which training received by the subjects may have contributed to their acquisition of lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. In the non-availability of longitudinal observation of listening instruction, including but not limited to classroom observation, the use of students' course notes for the analysis of the 'implemented' syllabus may be an acceptable alternative that is available.

The description and review of the listening instruction the English Department was carried out using a matrix. The matrix (see Table 3.8: Listening & note taking instruction in the English department - evaluation matrix (strategies practised), page 97) consists of entries similar to the questionnaire items about listening instruction. These entries relate to course content, particularly as regards training in key lecture comprehension and note taking strategies.

Once the matrix was ready, we proceeded with the examination of the official statement of the listening syllabus along with course notes from five students selected for their assiduity and serious work. These students were selected because they kept notes with higher completeness and accuracy, which is necessary for the description to be valid. The course notes were collected from students from different classes (1999 and 2000), and different groups as well to ensure the most complete description of the instruction. The complete documentation of the first year course was available and some parts of the second year course notes.

Efforts were made to collect and analyse the clearest course notes possible. Nevertheless, the audio input used by the three instructors could not be collected. The degree of linguistic and conceptual appropriateness in input texts had therefore to be dropped from the characterisation of listening instruction.

The description of instruction looked at quantitative and qualitative levels of appropriateness in the teaching. Possible 'negative' instruction is considered too. And those areas in lecture comprehension and note taking that were overlooked are highlighted. The latter are related to the general status of listening instruction in the Department of English.

In conclusion, Chapter two described the instruments used to collect data for the present study and how they were implemented. Five research instruments were used to investigate the subjects' lecture comprehension and note taking strategies: the Test of Lecture Comprehension, the subjects' lecture notes, lecture observation, the survey questionnaire and the regular listening instruction. The selection of the research tools was determined by the nature of the area under investigation and the data needed to answer the research questions presented in the opening section in this chapter. The design combines direct probes into the students'strategy use with self-report methodology. This combination should be helpful in collecting data that reflects as accurately as possible the area under investigation.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA TREATMENT & PRESENTATION

Chapter three: Data treatment & presentation

The implementation of the design described in chapter two above yielded a large amount of qualitative and quantitative data. This chapter gives an account of the data collected and the way the latter were treated and organised. Treatment of data is particularly centred on assessing and enhancing their value for the study. The data are presented in such a way to let relevant patterns emerge from the massive quantity of information.

3.1 Data treatment

The first quantification of the subjects' performance in the Test of Lecture Comprehension consisted in classifying and tallying the responses in four categories: correct, incorrect, incomplete and unanswered. But it turned out later that the `incomplete` category took more than 44% of the responses in the 2001 administration. A finer analysis was made to dig out more accurate and discriminating data that could prove of more use later for inferences about the subjects` test performance.

The revised version of the quantification of the subjects` performance in the Test of Lecture Comprehension consisted in translating the responses into grades according to a scoring scale. The five test tasks in each of the four version of the test did not receive equal credits. Three main criteria lie behind differential scoring weight. The first task on each one of the leaves has higher probability of illicit test behaviour such as going back to answer or revise a task, or getting answers from other testees; therefore, they received the lowest credits. Credit decreased too proportionally to the potential contribution of chance to correct answers. Conversely, it increases with the level of cognitive demands made by each test task. Table 3.1 below presents full details of how these criteria reflected in grades allotted to each task.

Table 3.1
The Test of lecture comprehension- detailed scoring scale

Version	Tasks	Grades Allotted: Correct	Grades Allotted: Incorrect	Rationale
Version 1	Task 1	10	0	Lower grade credit because of risks of testees going back to do or review the task despite instructions and invigilating. Plus 15 % chance factor
	Task 2	15	0	Plus 25 % chance factor (closed-ended item)
	Task 3	20	0	Credit slightly higher here because the testees have to suggest produce (vs., tick) the correct response
	Task 4	35	0	Higher strategy, more demanding and less affected by the chance factor. Details: 5 points for each correct relative position and 5 points for hierarchy between main and subsidiary ideas. Plus a 17.7 % chance factor
	Task 5	20	0	Detail: 4 points for each key word included; plus chance factor (5/11 words only = 45.45 % chance)
	Total	100	0	Chance Potential 20.63%
Version 2	Task 1	15	0	Lower grade credit because of risks of testees going back to do the task despite instructions and invigilating. Plus 25 % chance factor
	Task 2	20	0	Credit higher here because the testees have to suggest produce (vs. tick) the correct response
	Task 3	25	0	Credit slightly higher here because the testees do not have time to go back to do or review the task; yet plus a 25 % chance factor
	Task 4	20	0	Risks of the testees going back to do the task despite instructions and invigilating. Plus a 25 % chance factor
	Task 5	20	0	Detail: 4 points for each key word included; plus a 33.3 % chance factor
	Total	100	0	Chance Potential 21.66 %
Version 3	Task 1	14	0	Lower grade credit because of risks of the testees going back to do the task despite instructions and invigilating. Plus a 15 % chance factor
	Task 2	16	0	Credit higher here because testees have to suggest or produce (vs. tick) correct response
	Task 3	18	0	Credit slightly higher here because the testees do not have time to go back to do or review the task; yet plus a 25 % chance factor
	Task 4	32	0	Higher strategy, more demanding and less affected by the chance factor (12.2 %). Detail: 4 points for each correct relative position and 4 points for hierarchy between main and subsidiary ideas
	Task 5	20	0	Detail: 4 points for each key word included. Plus a 33.33 % chance factor
	Total	100	0	Chance Potential 17.1 %
Version 4	Task 1	10	0	Lower grade credit because of risks of the testees going back to do the task despite instructions and invigilating. Plus a 25 % chance factor
	Task 2	15	0	Plus a 25 % chance factor
	Task 3	20	0	Credit slightly higher here because the testees do not have time to go back to do or review the task. Plus a 25 % chance factor
	Task 4	35	0	Higher strategy, more demanding and less affected by the chance factor (12.2 %). Detail: 5 points for each correct relative position and 5 points for the irrelevant ideas.
	Task 5	20	0	Detail: 4 points for each key word included. Plus a 33.33 % chance factor
	Total	100	0	Chance Potential 12.2 %

After scoring the test papers, the grades were entered in excel calculation sheets for the purposes of tabulation and statistical analysis. The test scores were tallied for each one of the four versions of the test. Combined grades were calculated too for each one of the nine lecture comprehension strategies assessed by the test. The latter operation was meant to display patterns, if any, of differential performance in individual strategies. Table 3.5-A: The Test of lecture comprehension- aggregated results by test version and Table 3.5-B: The Test of lecture comprehension- aggregated results by strategy present the subjects` performance by version as well as by individual strategy respectively.

The questionnaire yielded data about the subjects' lecture comprehension strategies. The quantification and compacting of the responses required a lot of time. The process started with addressing quantitative aspects. The responses were added up for each question by category of respondents (students, listening teachers and lecturers), i.e. counting the number of the respondents who ticked scale 1, scale 2, etc. The numbers were further compacted to two categories: Students (2001 + 2002) and faculty (listening teachers + lecturers). Response percentages were then calculated for 'significant categories'. A significant category represents a pattern in the responses that indicates a key feature relevant to the discussion of the subjects' lecture comprehension and note taking abilities. These categories are used in the presentation of the results below to discuss those features.

Before using those significant categories in a presentation and discussion of the results, a number of credentials need to be set up. The following sub-sections address the key issues that should help readers interpret the results from a better perspective.

The validity of introspective data is the most important issue here. A quality scheme for these data includes not only measures implemented before and during the administration of the research tool, but also operations during

data quantification and evaluation. The quality of questionnaire data was checked against a number of parameters. The first parameter consists of the degree of responsiveness in the returned questionnaires, i.e. the percentage of items completed per group of respondents and per section of the questionnaire. Across the five categories of respondents (the 2001 subjects, the 2002 subjects, the listening teachers in Blida and Algiers Universities and the lecturers), questionnaire responsiveness reached a satisfactory level. Table 3.2 below shows that overall responsiveness was as high as 96.7 % (lowest: 91.88 %; highest 98.45 %). This quantitative parameter entailed that 13 questionnaires completed by students (10 from 2001 and 3 from 2002) were dropped due to responsiveness lower than 80%. Low completion rates were considered as indicators of a lack of consistency that depreciates the value of responses.

Table 3.2
The Questionnaire- rates of questionnaire completion

Respondents	#	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Blank items	Overall
Subjects 2001	74	97.34%	98.14%	97.24%	98.75%	182	97.83%
Subjects 2002	57	96.7%	97.97%	97.92%	98.5%	134	97.67%
Total Subjects	131	97.16%	98.07%	97.52%	98.65%	316	97.77%
Lecturers	12	100%	98.33%	95.17%	98.33%	26	97.48%
LT-University of Blida	3	91.66%	79.71%	98.24%	99.16%	19	91.88%
LT-University of Algiers	3	100%	99.13%	98.94%	96.66%	6	98.45%
Total Listening Teachers	6	95.83%	89.42%	98.59%	97.91%	25	95.16%
Total Faculty	18	97.22%	95.36%	96.31%	98.19%	51	96.70%

Key:

LT= Teacher of listening comprehension

The three open items in the questionnaire served as a second data quality check. Items 17, 21 and 28 ask the respondents to tick a scale and provide further data as well. Providing more details appropriately reflects involvement and probably careful responding that can only contribute to the quality of the data. This parameter indicates that data from the 2001 subjects may be more credible than those from the 2002 subjects (see Table 3.3 below). This is based on the fact that, on average, 45 % of the 2002 respondents left the open item

empty (vs. 19 % of the 2001 subjects). Besides, 26.88 % of the responses given by the 2002 subjects on the open items were incomprehensible or irrelevant (vs. 10.81 for 2001 subjects).

Table 3.3
The Questionnaire- students' data credibility: responsiveness on open items

Item	17		21		28		Combined Open Items	
Subjects	NC	Incomp/Irre	NC	Incomp/Irre	NC	Incomp/Irre	NC	Incomp/Irre
2001	2.38%	7.32%	47.50%	13.60%	7.14%	11.51%	19%	10.81%
2002	47.37%	23.33%	57.80%	12.50%	29.82%	45.03%	45%	26.88%

Key:

- NC = Non completed
- Incomp / Irre = Incomprehensible / Irrelevant

Because responses from teachers are essentially second hand data about the students, more scrutiny of these data was carried out. In order to assess the credit that could be given to data from lecturers and listening teachers especially about the students, a credibility score was calculated for each respondent. Besides overall responsiveness, the key component parameter is the consistency of the responses. The questionnaires incorporated a number of consistency checks. These are items eliciting the same or similar data but spaced throughout the questionnaire (see Figure 3.1 below). The scale differences between these items were added up to form a number of inconsistencies in the responses. For instance, if a respondent ticks scale 1 for item A and scale 3 for item E that is a paraphrase of A, the inconsistency number will be (- 2).

Section One:

1. Try to note everything down
2. Try to distinguish main / secondary idea
3. Want to understand every word
4. Ignore unknown words
5. Pay more attention to some words

Possible Inconsistencies between
1 – 2 2 – 3 2 – 4 2 – 5 3 – 4 3 – 5 4 – 5

Section Two:

1. Relate topic of lecture to the students' general knowledge
2. Relate topic to the students' prior knowledge

Section Three:

1. Using conversations vs. mini-lectures as listening passages
2. Trying to understand all words vs. paying attention to some parts.

Figure 3.1
The Questionnaires- Response consistency checks

Two other parameters combined with responsiveness and consistency to indicate the credibility of faculty data; namely, provision of extra information and whether the respondents were teaching the subjects at the time of the investigation. Table 4.4: The Questionnaire- assessment of faculty data credibility summarises the procedure. Some faculty responded positively to a request for more data thus reflecting more involvement and care. More credit (plus 10 point) was given to teachers who were teaching the subjects at the time of the questionnaire completion. The data credibility score ranged from 46 % to 95 % with an average score of 66.67 % for lecturers and 52 % for listening teachers. The scores indicate variability of credibility among the respondents.

The difficult task remains to determine a threshold for acceptability of data here. Besides, the humanistic nature of the research does not make necessary quasi-perfect standards of accuracy. Hence, even the data from the respondents with the lowest credibility score (46 %) was accepted as the

potential inaccuracy in this source may well be moderated by being added to the much greater numbers of direct sources: the students. Nevertheless, the results from the analysis of faculty data credibility suggests that some higher credit may be given to data from the lecturers. This may, however, be counterbalanced by the fact that the responses of the listening teachers derive their validity form observing smaller numbers of students. The number of subjects is much smaller in listening classes (15-30) compared to the numbers in lecture halls (50-120).

Table 3.4
The Questionnaire- assessment of faculty data credibility

Faculty	Section One		Section Two		Section Three		Section Four		Total					
	NI	NAI	nI	NAI	nI	NAI	nI	NAI	OI	nI	NAI	ED	2nd Y	CS/100
L	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	-3	1	3			62
L2	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	-3	6	0			43
L3	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	3	1			68
L4	0	0	0	2	7	5	0	1	1	7	8	5	10	49
L5	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	-3	3	1		10	66
L6	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	3	0			70
L7	0	0	0	1	6	1	0	2	1	6	4			47
L8	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	4	0			65
L9	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	5		81
L10	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	3	1		10	78
L11	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	-3	1	1		10	76
L12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0		10	95
												Average		66.67
13-LTA	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	-3	5	1			46
14-LTB	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	-3	5	0		10	58
15-LTC	0	3	0	3	1	1	0	1	-3	1	8			52
												Average		52
16*LT1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	-3	2	1	5		66
17*LT2	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	-3	4	2			49
18*LT3	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	-3	4	2			49
												Average		54.67

Key:

nI = number of Inconsistencies, a value equal to the number of questionnaire scales (1-3 scales) separating responses on 2 similar items NAI = The number of items left unanswered
OI = Open Items completion grade; -3 = non - answered ------------ +1 = all answered.
ED = Extra Data; notes added by the respondents probably reflecting involvement and care; allotted 5 points
2nd Y = Faculty teaching 2nd year students at the time of the questionnaire completion, an indication of the pertinence of the responses allotted 10 points.
CS = Credibility Score; a relative indication of each respondent's data credibility calculated by the following formula: 82 + (((-nI)*5) + (OI*3) + ((-NAI)*2) + ED + 2ndY).
NB: 82 = Total Credibility score (100) - Extra Quality Value (OI + ED + 2nd Y)

Another key issue rose in the process of analysing the subjects' lecture notes. In many cases, the notes taken by the subjects consisted of one-word notation with no apparent links and hardly any semantic coherence that would hint to one of the idea units identified in the input text. These eventually were not counted as propositional units. But the situation poses some hindrance to the attempt at assessing the quality of the notes. One should acknowledge the risk that some of the one-word notations may be meaningful to the subjects who took them down. One-word notations may serve as triggers or key words for propositional meaning that is mentally represented. In such conditions, the analysis of the subjects' notes must admit the possibility that some of the notes could be slightly underestimated.

3.2 Presentation of the data

The data collected in this study are presented below in six categories. These are the subjects' performance in the Test of Lecture Comprehension, the subjects' reported use of lecture comprehension strategies, the subjects' performance in a lecture note taking task, the subjects' reported use of lecture note taking strategies, instruction in listening comprehension and the characteristics of lectures in the English Department.

3.2.1 The Subjects' performance in the test of lecture comprehension

3.2.1.1 *Attending to the introduction to predict overall structure of lecture*

The first task in all four versions of the Test of Lecture Comprehension tapped the subjects' ability to attend to the introductory sentences of the lecture so as to anticipate its overall structure. 300 testees completed this semi-closed task. The overall average grade is 42.09%.

3.2.1.2 *Recognising the overall structure of the lecture*

Task four in versions one, three and four of the test targets the subjects' ability to recognize the overall structure of the lecture using in-text markers mainly. 235 testees completed the task that consists in reorganizing provided notes in an outline. They obtained an overall average score of 20.57%. 98.17% of the testees failed to identify a hierarchical relationship in the notes. Besides, 87.87% were unable to decide about relevance and included an irrelevant note.

Table 3.5-A
The Test of lecture comprehension- aggregated results by version

	2001			2002			Total		
Version	*M/100*	*SD*	*N*	*M/100*	*SD*	*n*	*M/100*	*SD*	*n*
Version 1	34.8	17.18	30	31.175	14.72	40	30.73	15.71	70
Version 2	28.77	17.22	26	25.72	15.05	39	26.94	15.79	65
Version 3	37.75	13.6	57	32.57	16.02	37	35.71	14.64	94
Version 4	35.5	19.06	39	24.47	13.55	32	29.54	17.3	71
Overall	34.6	16.771	152	28.63	15.13	148	31.65	16.23	300

Table 3.5-B
The Test of lecture comprehension- results by strategy

	2001			2002			Total		
	M/100	*SD*	*N*	*M/100*	*SD*	*n*	*M/100*	*SD*	*n*
Strategy 1	40.36	6.18	152	43.88	6.13	148	42.09	6.16	300
Strategy 2	24.69	7.85	126	15.9	5.41	109	20.57	6.98	235
Strategy 3	21.64	4.5	83	9.66	4.26	76	14.48	4.56	159
Strategy 4	8.91	5.63	69	12.81	6.61	72	10.74	6.16	141
Strategy 5	60.39	3.41	152	51.15	3.86	148	56.06	3.75	300
Strategy 6	11.52	7.99	26	12.8	8.36	39	12.3	8.21	65
Strategy 7	52.14	8.46	39	42.14	8.32	32	47.98	8.45	71
Strategy 8	33.33	7.07	30	37.5	7.26	40	35.71	7.19	70
Strategy 9	26.9	8.87	26	27.18	8.76	39	27.05	8.8	65
Overall	31.1	6.66	152	28.11	6.55	148	29.66	6.7	300

Key:

- M/100: Mean score out of 100.
- SD: Standard deviation.
- N: Number of subjects.

3.2.1.3 *Predicting topic change*

Task two in versions two and three tests the subjects' ability to spot a precursor marker to a change in the topic of the lecture. 159 testees completed this semi-closed task. On average, they scored 14.48%. This score is practically chance free as the testees had to ignore proposed options and produce the correct one.

3.2.1.4 *Using markers to identify topic change*

Task three in versions one and four assesses the subjects' ability to identify a change in the topic of the lecture while it is occurring or after it occurs via markers. 141 testees completed this closed (version 4) or semi-closed (version 1) task. Their overall score fell to 10.74%. In version one, task three requires the testees to produce the exact response, hence neutralizing chance factor. The performance falls even more to 5.93%.

3.2.1.5 *Recognising key words*

Task five in all four versions evaluates the subjects on the ability to identify key lexical items in a lecture from a list given to them. 300 testees completed this close-ended task. They could get an overall score of 56.06%. The testees' performance in task five is the highest across the nine strategies tested. The scores should nevertheless be moderated against the *highest* chance potential across the test tasks (30-50%).

3.2.1.6 *Inferring implicit meaning*

Task three in version two tests the subjects on their ability to infer meaning not explicitly stated by the lecturer. The 65 testees who completed this (semi) closed-ended task scored an overall average of 12.3%.

3.2.1.7 *Guessing the meaning of unknown words*

Task three in version three and task two in version four gauge the subjects' ability to infer the meaning of unknown words from the context. The 71 testees who completed this (semi) closed-ended task scored an overall average score of 47.98%.

3.2.1.8 *Synthesising meaning across propositions*

Task two in version one assesses the ability of the subjects to synthesise meaning across several utterances and parts of lectures. Only 35.71% of the testees were successful in *ticking* the right response.

3.2.1.9 *Identifying the attitude of the speaker*

Task four in version two tests the subjects on their ability to infer the attitude of the lecturer. 65 testees completed this closed-ended task. Only 27.05% of them were able *to tick* the right response.

Overall, the subjects' performance in the Test of Lecture Comprehension is consistently lower than average. The 2001 subjects scored on average 34.60% of correct responses and the 2002 ones scored lower at 28.48%. Besides, overall, the items of the Test of Lecture Comprehension can be affected by an average potential chance factor of about 20.2%. The chance factor combines with an occasionally observed and potential 'cheating factor', and to a lesser extent with a moderate potential of 'prior knowledge factor'.

3.2.2 The Subjects' reported use of lecture comprehension strategies

The Test of Lecture Comprehension assessed the subjects on nine key lecture comprehension strategies. The data gathered by the test and presented above were supplemented by the survey questionnaire. The aggregated responses on the nine strategies as well as on other important ones are presented below. The following section proceeds with a presentation of these results. Data from the questionnaires are organised and discussed in terms of the significant categories (discussed above) related to key lecture comprehension strategies. Readers can find a full account of the questionnaire responses under Appendix I (The Questionnaire: aggregated responses).

The primary analysis of the questionnaire data consisted in aggregating and contrasting data collected from the subjects, listening teachers and lecturers about a number of issues. Contrasting data from different sources within the questionnaire and among the different research procedures used in the present study as well not only gives some indication about the reliability of such data (consistency) but also points to patterns that may not be visible on the three separate questionnaires. These patterns are presented in the following paragraphs.

First, it is quite relevant to check the importance of the object of the study; i.e. the lecture and ultimately lecture comprehension and note taking in the English Department. 60% of the students report that they often/always rely on lecture notes to prepare for regular exams. Compared to readings and other sources, lectures appear to be the core of academic learning for the respondents. 66.5% of the lecturers reinforce the position of the lecture by giving exam items that the students can completely answer from their lecture notes. These responses apparently establish the lecture as the dominant learning/teaching mode in the English Department.

The crucial importance of learning from lectures requires from the students a sufficient ability level in aural comprehension and note taking. It is quite worrisome to find out that at least 25% of the students that were surveyed say that their ability to follow and understand lectures is low (23.5% of the surveyed teachers). The following sub-sections move from these global indicators of the subjects' lecture comprehension and note taking abilities to examine data on specific strategies.

3.2.2.1 *Recognising topic and predicting topic change* using markers are vital tasks for listeners. Only 29.5% of the teachers judge their students' ability to know what the exact topic of the lecture is good. This may be related to the fact that only 38% of the students say they always think about what the content of the lecture will be from the title and the introductory sentences. Besides, 35.7% of the students believe that thinking about the content of the lecture from its title and introduction, far from being essential and helpful, is a source of problems or at best neutral for lecture comprehension.

3.2.2.2 *Using markers to follow topic development* may compensate missing the introduction. But *only* 9.5% of the students reported using rhetorical markers regularly to predict what the lecturer is going to say. As far as ability is concerned, only 42.25% of the students think that their ability to follow the development of lecture topics is good (29.5% of faculty). Besides, only 31.5% of them believe that their ability to predict what the lecturer is going to say next is good.

3.2.2.3 *Using intonation* as a marker is a strategy available to listeners. Unfortunately, many subjects seem not efficient in using prosodic features to achieve acceptable comprehension. Only 50.5% of them think that their ability to understand the function of intonation as emphasis marker is good.

3.2.2.4 *Recognising the overall structure of the lecture* depends extensively on decoding the discourse markers. Up to 52.5% of the students say that thinking about the organisation of the lecture is a source of problems or at least neutral to lecture comprehension. These data are consistent with ratings of ability levels. Only 34.5% of the students state that their ability to see the organisation of the lecture is good. 36% of them actually said they never/rarely perceive lecture organisation. Moreover, only 81% of the students say that they do *not* systematically try to see connections between ideas presented in a lecture. Indeed, 50% of faculty observed that their students never/rarely pointed out a relationship between ideas in listening passages or lectures.

3.2.2.5 *Using* adequate *prior knowledge* could compensate for inefficient use of cues in lectures (rhetorical markers and visual support). Unfortunately, only 56% of the students often/always try to see relationships between what they already know and what is being said by lecturers.

3.2.2.6 *Selecting key information* from lecture input is impeded by the failure to identify markers which are necessary to build a mental representation of the overall structure of the lecture eventually. On-line selection loses ground substantially for differed selection due to inefficient strategy choices. 58% of the students acknowledge that they never/rarely or only sometimes try to distinguish main ideas from secondary points in a lecture. As far as attitude is concerned, 55.5% of the students think that paying attention to *everything* lecturers say is helpful to lecture comprehension. This attitude is confirmed by their response to a related item; 45% of them report that paying attention to *some* parts in lectures more than others is a source of problems or at best a neutral factor in comprehending lectures.

3.2.2.7 *Identifying key words* indicates how successful are the listeners in identifying the overall structure of the lecture. Only 46.5% of the students say their ability to recognise important words is good. Lexical problems are due to

strategic reasons also. For instance, 28% of the students said it is helpful to try to understand all words while listening. Therefore probably, most of the teachers estimate low their students' *ability to deal with new/unknown lexical items* because they observed them to try to understand *all* the new words. This observation is acknowledged by 73.5% of the students. Besides, as new information is often expressed by new lexical items, *inferring* the *meaning* of unknown words becomes an essential task for listeners. 61.5% of the students think that their ability to infer the meaning of new words from the context is low to only average.

3.2.2.8 *Inferring implied meaning* depends on the mental representation of the lecture. 53.5% of the surveyed teachers think that their students' ability to understand the speaker's implied meaning is low. Quite understandably, when explicit meaning is missed, it becomes difficult to find sufficient ground to infer implicit meaning and guess the meaning of unknown words.

3.2.2.9 *Monitoring one's performance* is a vital strategy especially with a limited availability (real or perceived) of lecture outlines and introductions, and inefficient use of rhetorical and visual cues. Efficient listeners use monitoring to check their own performance, spot problems they may encounter and eventually devise solutions. Less than 41% of the students often/always think about what parts of the lecture they are going to focus on. Good monitoring of one's performance calls for strategies to check understanding, signal comprehension problems and find out solutions to them. *Interaction* may be a good tool for optimising communication in the lecture hall. Yet, 47.5% of the students report that they never/rarely ask questions to lecturer. In addition, according to the faculty, only 38.5% of the students ask for clarification.

3.2.3 The Subjects' performance in a lecture note taking task

The results of the analysis of the subjects' notes indicate low standards of achievement on taking notes from academic lectures. The notes' efficiency scores are predominantly low. The subjects often resorted to a verbatim note-all strategy. The usual consequences in such conditions are illegible notations, inconsistent and unclear abbreviations and symbols, little structure and no indication of hierarchy.

Tables 3.6 below and 3.7: The Subjects' lecture notes- evaluation of notes from the test of lecture comprehension, present the results of the analysis of the notes. Overall, the subjects' performed quite low in organisation (hierarchy of content) and structuring. The latter features couple with some mishearing and to a lesser extent illegibility of notations to undermine the notes' degree of accuracy. Accuracy in notes was found critical (see section 1.3).

Table 3.6
The Subjects' notes: evaluation of the notes from the observed lecture

Subjects	OF/80	S /10	A /10	IUN (/12)	Le	Comp%	Note Quality
S1	15	0	0	6	68	50	32.5
S2	36	10	0	9	39	75	60.5
S3	30	5	0	6	42	50	42.5
S4	36	5	0	8.5	32	70.83	55.92
S5	51	10	5	7.5	64	62.5	64.25
S6	31	0	5	5	50	41.67	38.83
S7	10	5	10	7.5	47	62.5	43.75
S8	31	5	0	7.8	12	65	50.5
Averages	30	5	2.5	7.1625	44.25	59.69	48.59

Key:
OF = Score obtained out of 80 points for use of organisational features (outlining, listing, tabulating,, etc.)
S/10 = Symbols - assessment of use
A/10 = Abbreviations - assessment of use
IUN = Main Idea Units Noted out of the 12
Le = Grades obtained on the lecture comprehension test
Comp = Notes Completeness Score calculated as: Comp = IUN*100/12 (12 = Total Idea Units)
Note Quality = Assessment of quality of notes. Formula: Note Quality = (Comp +OF+(S/10) + (A/10)/2

Tables 3.7

The Subjects' Lecture Notes- Evaluations of notes on the test of lecture comprehension Part 1

Lecture 3	CoN	GrN	OF /25	S+	S-	Ab+	Ab-	MisH	Illig	Idea Units			TA / 6	Le Grades	Comp%	Eff	Note Quality	Le Scores Correlation with		
Subjects										High Main /15	Low Main /50	Secondary/12						Comp%	Eff	Note Quality
S1	87	29	10	10	5	17	2	0	2	4	9	1	4	68	19.75	30	67.75			
S2	123	14	12	17	9	17	5	3	0	4	11	2	3	39	22.93	34	75.94			
S3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	42	*	*	*			
S4	18	3	0	5	1	2	0	2	0	0	0.5	0	0	32	0.637	1	2.64			
S5	206	35	0	14	4	34	2	8	0	7	19	4	6	64	40.13	59	112.14			
S6	123	9	5	12	7	25	8	8	21	3.5	3.5	1	0	50	11.78	17.5	16.29			
S7	112	40	5	1	0	8	2	2	0	1.5	7	5	0	47	14.97	18.5	40			
S8	150	54	10	19	3	10	1	7	0	3.5	9.5	2	0	12	20.06	29.5	65.07			
S9	78	17	10	12	0	8	1	2	5	3.5	5	0.5	3	30	13.38	20.5	46.38			
Averages	112	25	6	10	3	15	2.3	4	4	3.4	8.06	1.9	2	42.7	15.96	23.3	47.37	0.37	0.37	0.29

Key:
CoN = Number of content words GrN = Number of grammar words
OF = Score obtained out of 25 points for the use of organisational features (outlining, listing, tabulating, colour, etc.)
S = Symbols (+ meaningful/consistent; - unclear/inconsistent) A = Abbreviations (+ meaningful/consistent; - unclear/inconsistent)
MisH = The number of misheard lexical items Illig = The number of notations that the researcher could not read
TA = Test answerability, a score reflecting the number of test items that could be answered from the notes taken; 2 points for each.
Le Grades = Grades obtained by the subjects on Test of Lecture Comprehension
Comp =Notes' completeness score calculated with the formula Comp = [(M1*3) + (M2*2) + S]*100/149 (149 = Total possible Note Score)
Eff = Notes' efficiency score of the notes calculated with the formula Eff = [(M1*3)+(M2*2)+(S)]/(CoN+GrN)
Note Quality = An assessment of the quality of the notes calculated via the formula: NoteQuality= (Eff)+Comp+OF+(((+S)-(-S))+ ((+A)-(- A)/2)) - MisH

Tables 3.7

The Subjects' Lecture Notes- Evaluations of notes on the test of lecture comprehension Part 2

Lecture 4	CoN	GrN	OF / 25	S+	S-	A+	A-	MisH	Illeg	Idea Units			TA / 6	Le Grades	Comp%	Eff	Note Quality	Le Scores Correlation with		
Subjects										High Main /15	Low Main /50	Secondary/12						Comp%	Eff	Note Quality
703	15	7	5	3	0	4	2	0	3	2	0	0	1	77	4.027	27.3	35.8			
S11	121	25	20	42	3	27	6	6	10	2.5	10.5	5.5	6	36	22.82	28.5	85.36			
820	136	12	15	16	12	18	4	16	13	0	7	3.5	2	5	11.74	14	20.77			
S13	27	4	20	5	3	5	0	0	1	1	4.5	2	3	73	9.396	12.1	43.96			
S14	61	10	15	26	0	6	1	2	2	1	3	2.5	2	12	7.718	9.03	43.24			
S15	71	6	10	0	0	6	2	4	3	1.5	2	3	2	27	7.718	8.54	21.26			
S16	127	14	10	8	7	13	4	4	9	1	7	2	5	23	12.75	17	31.77			
S17	94	17	5	12	7	5	0	10	4	0	3	0	1	33	4.027	28.5	28.57			
S18	10	3	10	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	24	2.685	28.5	39.72			
Averages	74	11	12	12	4	9.4	2.1	4.67	5	1	4.33	2.1	2.4	34.4	9.21	19.3	38.94	0.68	0.58	0.20

Key:
CoN = Number of content words   GrN = Number of grammar words
OF = Score obtained out of 25 points for the use of organisational features (outlining, listing, tabulating, colour, etc.)
S = Symbols (+ meaningful/consistent; - unclear/inconsistent)   A = Abbreviations (+ meaningful/consistent; - unclear/inconsistent)
MisH = The number of misheard lexical items   Illig = The number of notations that the researcher could not read
TA = Test answerability, a score reflecting the number of test items that could be answered from the notes taken; 2 points for each.
Le Grades = Grades obtained by the subjects on Test of Lecture Comprehension
Comp =Notes' completeness score calculated with the formula Comp = [(M1*3) + (M2*2) + S]*100/149 (149 = Total possible Note Score)
Eff = Notes' efficiency score of the notes calculated with the formula Eff = [(M1*3)+(M2*2)+(S)]/(CoN+GrN)
Note Quality = An assessment of the quality of the notes calculated via the formula: NoteQuality= (Eff)+Comp+OF+(((+S)-(-S))+ ((+A)-(-A)/2)) - MisH – Illeg

Qualitative parameters distinguished subjects at different ability levels. Yet, the scores of test lecture notes quality obtained by the sample of note takers as a whole did not significantly correlate with performance in the Test of Lecture Comprehension (see Tables 4.6 above and 4.7 below). The correlation of note quality with test scores produced a negative value for the notes taken during the observed lecture (-0.25). Positive, yet relatively low values of correlation were found with notes taken on the test lectures.

To put this into perspective, it may be useful to underscore the difficulty to define what is essential to note in a lecture. Note quality and quantity heavily depend on factors that are not essentially part of the lecture comprehension ability. According to their style and prior knowledge in particular, listeners may vary to some degree about the hierarchy of content importance and therefore on the text to note down. To illustrate, the analysis of the notes taken from the test lectures showed that subject 703, with the highest test score, obtained the second lowest score on note completeness. The subject took down 15 content words and 7 function words. This may partly explain the correlation values presented above. Nevertheless, subject 703 had the second highest efficiency while subject 820, with lowest score on the Test of Lecture Comprehension, had an efficiency score of 14.02 (third lowest).

The performance of the subjects in the note taking task was markedly low. The notes display an insufficient ability to select key informational content. Efficiency scores obtained by the subjects tell that the notes reflect low ability in identifying key information and synthesising lecture content. In the observed lecture, main ideas 2 was dictated twice. Six subjects out of the eight who handed in their notes took down the idea and its repetition. Only one subject, the highest performer in the Test of Lecture Comprehension, managed to note MI 9 signalling probably a better ability. She distinguished herself further by elaborating on MI 8, which is the sole instance of elaboration in the subjects' notes.

3.2.4 The Subjects' reported use of lecture note taking strategies

The analysis of the notes taken by the subjects from the observed lectures and the lectures used for the Test of Lecture Comprehension yielded low scores on the note quality indexes used for their evaluation. The analysis also uncovered some less efficient strategies used by the subjects, especially, verbatim note taking. In the following section, we shall present data from the questionnaire about the reported use of lecture note taking strategies.

A lot of questions elicit information about the subjects' ability to take notes from lectures. 81.5% of the students who completed the questionnaire complained about difficulties in reading *their* own notes because the latter are incomplete; which may be due to inadequate comprehension and/or note taking strategies. Quite understandably then, 63.82% of the questionnaire respondents believe that when lecturers dictate they help the students. Actually, 87% of the students welcome the notes written by the lecturers on the board and think that they are helpful. Difficulties with note taking and the resulting lower quality of the notes appear in the process of note rewriting. Only 57.5% of the students think their ability to rewrite *their* notes is good.

The main reason behind problems with *note taking* would probably be the failure to select on-line and resorting to a note-all strategy. 83.5% of the faculty observed that their students often/always hurry to note everything down. Indeed, 33% of the students say they often/always note down lecture information then later decide if it is useful for exam preparation or not. This is coherent with responses given to an opposite item; 27% of the students report that they never/rarely decide while they are taking notes if the information is important to note down.

As found out in the subjects' notes, questionnaire responses highlight the use of verbatim strategy. 38.5% of the students report that they often/always try to take down full sentences from lectures. 91.5% of the faculty observed them doing so. We, too, noticed this behaviour while observing the lecture in the framework of this study. The students struggled to note down everything especially when the lecturer dictated. At some point, some of them could not keep up with the pace, dropped out and sat back.

Using a non-selective and verbatim strategy, even the best note-takers would find themselves in trouble. 87.5% of the students and 78.5% of the faculty report that speech rate causes difficulties to the students' aural comprehension. Although the questionnaire item does not specify high or low rate, the respondents' general salient experience with speech rate seems to be one of trouble, which led them to think about a high rate.

Efficient note taking involves much less non-selective verbatim notes and much more compacting of information often in notations that reduce the input text. Many subjects strategy in *synthesising and paraphrasing lecture content* may be impaired by a reported low ability to identify and select key information as well as to identify repetition and paraphrase. Only 20% of the students said that they often/always summarised mentally some of the information presented in lectures. Quite consistently and understandably, only 40% of the students believe that they are good at summarising spoken language. Compacting lecture content often requires using words other than the lecturer's. 26.5% of the students said that they never/rarely paraphrase lecture information. And at least 28.5% of the students acknowledge their insufficient ability in paraphrasing spoken language.

Synthesising lecture content 'on-line' is understandably a demanding task that requires time to be completed. *Time-saving techniques* (reduced notations like *symbols* and *abbreviations*) are often used by efficient note-takers. In the English Department, aural comprehension problems illustrated above seem to couple with inefficient note taking strategies to make taking notes from lectures quite a gruesome task for the students. 57% of the latter said that they never/rarely or only sometimes used a regular system of abbreviations. Expectedly, not less than 37% of the students find reading and rewriting their own notes difficult because the abbreviations used are no longer clear to them. And 34.5% of them acknowledge that their ability to use a regular system of abbreviations is low.

The need for other sources of information to make for class-time losses seems quite imperative in the case of the subjects studied here. Efficient learners mobilise available sources to strengthen classroom learning. But 39% of the students surveyed reported that they never/rarely used their teachers' handouts as supplementary sources to complete their notes. And up to 41% of them acknowledge that they never/rarely read about the topics treated in the lecture hall in order to edit and develop their notes.

Overall, the aggregated responses from the survey questionnaire underscore that a significant number of the subjects have problems with different aspects of academic note taking in lecture settings. Significant numbers of the subjects reported using inefficient strategies or not using better ones. Poor note quality is a consequence to not only aural comprehension problems but also to inefficient note taking strategies; notably, non-selective *verbatim strategy*. Some subjects took too many notes. They were observed to be engrossed in noting down almost everything. When the students come to editing their lecture notes, they often encounter problems while reading and rewriting their own notes. And many of them complain about their notes being incomplete.

3.2.5 Instruction in listening comprehension in the English department

The Department of English is expected to provide the students with training in the lecture comprehension and note taking skills that will enable them to learn efficiently. The analysis of the listening instruction received by the subjects yielded data that should help us complete the description of the subjects' ability levels in lecture comprehension and note taking. These data are supplemented by questionnaire responses.

In the first year, listening teacher A taught all the subjects from the two classes (2001-2002). His teaching consists of two major components: a theory phase and a practice phase. The theoretical phase introduces meta-linguistic knowledge. Examined course notes featured the following components:

- Principles of note taking (selection, abbreviations, etc.)
- Definition of listening
- Methods of showing structure in a talk (a speaker's perspective)
- Discourse markers: Introduction, transition, emphasis, etc.
- Logical relationship
- Reference
- Predicting: Guessing the unknown/unheard
- Hesitation and fillers in speech
- Asking for information
- Problems for listening: Dialect

These concepts which are related to EFL (English as a foreign language) listening in general are presented and *sometimes* illustrated and discussed.

The practice phase is apparently meant to let the students put into practice knowledge they had seen in the theory phase. Table 4.8: Listening & note taking instruction in the English department - evaluation matrix (strategies practised) below presents the strategies practised in the listening courses and

the number of pedagogic tasks done for each. The lecture comprehension strategies that were identified in the analysis of the course notes as being treated consist in taking notes (five times), using markers to predict upcoming text (three times), identifying the organisation of the input (once) and understanding the function of intonation in comprehension (once). The pedagogic tasks utilised to practise these strategies usually focus on details (eight tasks) especially in the form of table filling, shopping list and reference comprehension questions. And input texts feature a wide range of such general topics as pollution, transportation, old age, fitness, etc.

The first year course of listening is certainly the most central to the students' academic achievement in the English Department. Second year students embark on extensive content learning with the strategies they learnt in the first year. The training received by our subjects during their first year of study is actually a quite elaborate program. Yet, many notions introduced (e.g. lecture comprehension) do not get more than a single mention. Some listening strategies are presented and sometimes discussed. The amount of practice did not exceed at best four encounters (cf. Listening & note taking instruction in the english department - evaluation matrix (strategies practised) below).

How beneficial was the meta-linguistically based first year course to the students' listening ability (we are not using lecture comprehension to do a fair brief evaluation of the course)? After the explicit theoretical phase, 28% of the students said that trying to understand all words while listening was helpful. Nevertheless, 48.5% know that such strategy causes difficulties to comprehension. A previous questionnaire item also suggests that many students do not seem to have efficiently benefited from explicit teaching; 73.5% of the students reported that they often/always try to understand all words. Moreover, the students' performance in the first regular exam which assesses knowledge gains from the theoretical component of the course indicates severe problems; 90% of the scores fell under the passing average (10/20).

Table 3.8
Listening & note taking instruction in the English department - Evaluation matrix
(Strategies practised)

	Learning Tasks				Input Features	Focus*
Target Lecture Comprehension and Note Taking Strategies	Open / Closed	1= Teaching 2 = Testing	Relevance*	F = Form* / M=Meaning	Relevance	
Anticipating content from title	0	0	0	0	0	0
Anticipating content from the introduction	0	0	0	0	0	0
Identifying organisation (outline)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Using markers to predict upcoming text	O	1	10	M	6	1
Knowing what is the exact topic	C C C	1 1 1	6 5	F M M	6 6 0	1 1 1
Following the development of the topic.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Identifying connections between ideas	0	0	0	0	0	0
Distinguishing main from secondary points	0	0	0	0	0	0
Understanding intonation as marker for emphasis.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Identifying key words	C	1	10	F	6	1
Understanding contracted speech.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Understanding the speaker's implied meaning	0	0	0	0	0	0
Using prior knowledge to understand the new information	0	0	0	0	0	0
Using visuals to understand lectures	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asking questions to lecturer	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asking for repetition	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asking for clarification	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dealing with dense new information	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dealing with new vocabulary:	0	0	0	0	0	0
a- Guessing the meaning of unknown words	0	0	0	0	0	0
b- Ignoring unknown words	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taking notes of all important points	0	0	0	0	0	0
Selecting 'on line' the information to note	C C C C C C	2 2 2 2 2 2	5 7 7 7 7 7	F M M M M M	0 0 0 2 4 5	1 1 1 1 1 1
Summarising information mentally (synthesising)	O	1	10	M	6	1
Identifying ideas and their paraphrase	0	0	0	0	0	0
Noting information in one's words (paraphrasing)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paying attention to and noting board notes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Using regular abbreviations	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rewriting their lecture notes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Using following sources to complete notes:	0	0	0	0	0	0
a. Teacher's handouts?	0	0	0	0	0	0
b. Other students' notes?	0	0	0	0	0	0
c. Readings about the topic?	0	0	0	0	0	0

Key:

Teaching/Testing: Whether the task teaches or tests the strategy
* Relevance to the lecture hall listener's tasks estimated on a 0-10 scale
* Which is the focal aspect of the learning ask form or meaning?
* Relevance of the input text to content modules estimated on a 0-10 scale
* Focus: number of times the strategy was actually practised

As for the listening course for second year students, all the subjects were taught by listening teacher B. His instruction does not include a theoretical component. It seems a lexically driven method. Classes typically start with a presentation of sayings, phrasal verbs, proverbs, etc. Filling the gaps dominates pedagogy and underscores intensive listening as the salient listening type. Multiple listening to the input text is allowed systematically. And similarly to the first year course, general topics such as weather, people, gossip, etc. dominate the input. The latter comes in the form of short to very short expositions, narration and mostly in conversational mode.

Across levels, courses and instructors, listening instruction received by the subjects features a number of salient common features. Concerning content, input texts draw upon a variety of general topics and do not fall in any specific academic content area. Actually, the listening passages do not touch on academic content like linguistics, didactics or even literature. Only remote glimpses to civilisation might be found. The input is by and large presented in the form of unrelated conversations and sometimes expository and narrative texts.

As for natural features of spoken discourse, the listening teachers reported on the questionnaire that they sometimes use passages containing repetition in their listening course work. Besides, 24% of the students report that passages never/rarely feature pauses, hesitation, false starts and fillers. Listening teacher A agrees; yet listening teacher B says that these features of spoken discourse are often in his input texts. Globally, listening teachers A and B say their passages never look like lectures on topics from content modules. They also reported that they never/rarely used passages that are longer than ten minutes. As for the pedagogic tasks, filling tables and gaps, as well as reference comprehension questions dominate work in listening classes.

Overall, listening instruction, as far as we can tell from the students' course notes analysed, treated five of the strategies identified as characteristic of academic lecture comprehension and note taking (cf. Listening & note taking instruction in the English department - evaluation matrix (practised strategies)). These are:

1. Taking notes of key points using table filling (six times, five of which in the first year course);
2. Using markers to predict upcoming text (four times, of which three in the first year course);
3. Identifying the organisation of the input (once in the first year course);
4. Identifying intonation as marker of emphasis (once in the first year course); and
5. Synthesising meaning (once in the first year course).

Questionnaire data about listening instruction corroborate some of the findings from the analysis of the students' course notes (cf. Table 3.9: Listening and note taking instruction- questionnaire data). For instance, listening teachers B and C said that their courses never included working on the outline of listening passages. Instructor A says that he often does; yet, only one instance of outline task was found in the combined course notes. Mismatch between data from the questionnaire and from course notes analysis appears in other areas too. Table 3.10 below presents the four strategies about which course notes do no corroborate questionnaire responses.

Like with teaching proper, assessment in listening course was considered as well, not so much from a comprehensive approach as from a contrast with the requirements for an efficient lecture comprehension instruction. Therefore, a number of parameters common in test characterisation (such as reliability, validity, and other input specifications) are not taken up here.

Table 3.9
Listening and note taking instruction- questionnaire data

	Reported Insufficiencies			Reported Instructional Treatment		
How often does course provide for training in …	List Teachers	Students	Lecturers	List Teachers	Students	Lecturers
Anticipating content of lecture from title?	0	37.85	0	B:N, A:O	0	0
Anticipating content of lecture from introduction?	0	37.85	0	B:R, A:O	0	0
Identifying the organisation of input?	ABC:1-3	65.5:1-3	83.5:1-3	B:N, A:O	0	0
Using markers to predict upcoming text?	AB:2, C:4	79.5:1-3	82:1-3	B:R, A:O	0	0
Knowing what the exact topic is?	AB:3, C:4	0	66.5:1-3	0	0	0
Following the development of the topic.	ABC:1-3	54.5:1-3	75:1-3	0	0	0
*How often do listening passages look like lectures?	0	0	0	AB:N	0	0
*How often do listening passages feature	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Length exceeding 10 minutes?	0	0	0	B:N, A:R	66: N-R	
*How often do listening passages include:	0	0	0	0	0	0
a. Narrative?	0	0	0	AC: S, B:O	0	(83.5:O-A)
b. Descriptive/expository?	0	0	0	A:S, B:O, C:A	0	0
c. Argumentative?	0	0	0	BC:R, A:S	0	(50:O-A)
d. Conversational?	0	0	0	AB:O, C:A	0	50:O-A
Identifying connections between ideas?	ABC:1-3	61.5:1-3	75:1-3	0	0	0
Distinguishing main from secondary points?	ABC:1-3	65:1-3	83.5:1-3	B:S, A:O	0	0
*Passages used in listening classes feature	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Pauses, hesitation, false starts, fillers?	0	0	0	A:S, B:O	24:N-R	0
- Repetition?	A:2, BC:3	58:1-3	100:1-3	AB:S	19:N-R	91:O-A
Understanding intonation for emphasis.	ABC:1-3	49.5:1-3	91:1-3	0	0	0
Identifying key words?	ABC:1-3	53.5:1-3	83.5:1-3	A:S, B:O	0	0
Understanding contracted speech.	AB:2, C:4	79.5:1-3	100:1-3	0	0	0
Understanding the speaker's implied meaning?	AB:1, C:2	0	82:1-3	0	0	0
Using prior knowledge to understand new information?	A:1, BC:3	26.5:A	83.5:2-3	0	0	0
*Listening passages relate to each other?	0	0	0	A:N, B:A	0	0
*LT relate passages to listener's knowledge?	0	0	0	C:S, AB:A	41:N-R	0
Using visual support (maps, pictures, etc)?	0	0	0	(A:N, C:R, B:S)	89.5:N-R	0
Asking questions to lecturer?	0	(47.5:N-R)	(8.5:A)	0	0	0
Asking for repetition?				0	0	0
Asking for clarification?	(AB:R, C:S)	0	(66.5:R-S)	0	0	0
Dealing with dense new information?	ABC:2-3	0	83.5:1-3	0	0	0
Dealing with new vocabulary?				0	0	0
a- Guessing meaning of unknown words	ABC: 2	0	72.5:1-3	0	0	0
b- Ignoring unknown words?	B:1, AC:2	61.5:1-3	83.5:1-3	0	0	0
*(LT) Systematically explain new vocabulary?	0	0	0	BC:O, A:A	(78.5:O-A)	41.5:O-A
Taking notes of all important points?	A:1, B:2, C:3	53:1-3	83.5:1-3	0	0	0
Deciding 'on line' whether information is worth noting?	0	0	0	0	0	0
Identifying ideas and their repetition?	A:2, BC:3	58:1-3	100:1-3	0	0	0
Summarising information mentally?	AB:1, C:2	60:1-3	91.5:1-3	0	0	0
Noting down information in one's words?	A:1, BC:2	75:1-3	91.5:1-3	0	0	0
Paying attention to and note board notes?	0	31.5:1-3	91.5:1-3	0	0	0
Using regular abbreviations?	AB:1, C:2	61:1-3	0	0	0	0
Rewriting lecture notes.	A:1, B:2	42.5:1-3	66.5:1-3	0	0	0
Using following sources to complete lecture notes:	0	0	0	0	0	0
a. Teacher's handouts?	0	(39:N-R)	0	0	0	0
b. Other students' notes?	0	(25.5:N-R)	0	0	0	0
c. Readings about the topic?	0	(41:N-R)	0	0	0	0
Secondary school teachers give priority to listening?	0	0	0	A:N, B:R, C:S	59.5:N-R	60:N-R

Key: A, B, and C: Listening teachers
N, R, S, O and A: How often these strategies are practised (never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always.)
1, 2, 3, 4 and 5: A degree of ability on the strategy (1= very low, 2= low, 3= average, 4= good, 5= very good)
*: Marks items that are subordinate and supportive of the above unmarked item ( ): Statistics from closely related item

Table 3.10
Listening and note taking instruction
data mismatch between course notes analysis and the questionnaire

Strategies	Questionnaire	Course Notes Analysis
Identifying lecture	A: O	Once
Using markers in prediction	A: O	A: 4 times
Distinguishing main ideas	B: S, A: O	B: 0, A: 0
Identifying key words	A: S, B: O	B: 0, A: 0

Key:

A, B, C: Listening teachers
N, S, O, A: How often these strategies are practised (N= never; S= sometimes, O= often, A= always)

Concerning assessment, apart from the first exam in the first year course which consists of around 20 questions about the lectures in listening comprehension, listening exam papers are similar to pedagogic work. Input text specifications are the same with a salient conversational discourse about general and casual topics (weather, plane crash, etc.). Similar task specifications too; the written mode characterise both elicitation and response procedures. Students are usually asked to fill in slots in conversations and sometimes answer referential comprehension questions. Instructor B reflects the lexical bent of his course by including almost systematically antonym/synonym tasks. The testees listen and do or listen then do the test tasks. Multiple listening to the input text is always used. As for the strategies tested, intensive listening for details is salient. And sometimes the tasks tend to be limited to formal recognition (filling gaps). Instructor A may have approached note taking with table filling tasks nevertheless. Globally, instruction and assessment are very consistent with each other in every observable aspect for both the first and second year courses of listening.

In order to check the status of the listening module in the curriculum of the English degree, the official statement of the syllabus of listening comprehension was analysed. Teaching should start from a statement of the syllabus that defines goals. The official statement of the listening syllabus consists of a brief listing of vague objectives. The statement makes no reference to teaching note taking and most of the key lecture comprehension or listening strategies.

The official statement of the listening syllabus, which is presented below in Figure 3.2 falls in less than one lightly dense page. Loose and vague descriptions are given in no apparent logically related or graded pattern. General references to 'discussion', 'interview', 'situational English', 'songs', etc. appear on the light text. Besides, while impinging upon other modules like grammar, speaking and pronunciation, pure listening areas are missing. The statement makes no reference whatsoever to the listening or note taking strategies to teach.

LISTENING COMPREHENSION:

-Discussion
-Interviews
-Situational and functional English (as opposed to the structural English).
-Emphasis on the grammatical points in grammar module.

1) Tenses, sentences, structure
2) Basic idioms
3) Elements of phonetics (intonation)
4) Introduction to colloquial English

EXERCISES:

1st year:
-Guided dialogues language games.
-Pronunciation drills (practical grammar and phonetics).
-Communication situation (guided).

2nd year:
-Introduction to different registers.
-Exposure to different dialects.

3rd year:
BBC programmes, plays, American and English TV programmes...
-Lab: songs, listening with comprehension to authentic material, pronunciation drills.

Figure 3.2
The Official statement of the listening syllabus in the English department

The deficient attention that instruction in listening receives is apparently wide enough to include other levels and contexts. 59.5% of the students and 69% of the faculty believe that in secondary education, English teachers rarely give priority to listening activities. The syllabus of English in secondary education corroborates this assessment. For example, in the third year's course book, *Think It Over,* while 97 exercises practise reading, only 47 shorter exercises are aimed at listening. Moreover, in the introduction to the Teacher's Book, the authors talk about writing, speaking, reading and grammar on seven lengthy pages. Not a single word is said about listening comprehension.

A similar lack of attention may be observed in the curriculum in the English Department as can be seen on Table 3.11 below. The students take a weekly one-hour class, which contrasts with the 4, 3, 3, 3 and 2 hours allotted to grammar, writing, reading, Arabic literature and speaking respectively in the first, second and third year programs.

Table 3.11
Modules and workload in the English department

First Year		Third Year	
Modules	Hours/Week	Modules	Hours/Week
Writing + Reading	6 hrs	Writing + Reading	4 hrs
Speaking + Listening*	4 hrs	Speaking + Listening*	3 hrs
Grammar	4 hrs	Phonetics	2 hrs
Phonetics	2 hrs	Linguistics	2 hrs
Linguistics	2 hrs	British Civilisation	2 hrs
Cultural Studies	2 hrs	US Civilisation	2 hrs
Arabic Language & Literature	3 hrs	English Literature	2 hrs
		US Literature	2 hrs
		African Literature	2 hrs
		Arabic Language & Literature	2 hrs
Second Year		Fourth Year	
Writing + Reading	4 hrs	Didactics	2 hrs
Speaking + Listening*	3 hrs	Psycho-pedagogy	2 hrs
Grammar	2 hrs	Linguistics	2 hrs
Phonetics	2 hrs	British Civilisation	2 hrs
Linguistics	2 hrs	US Civilisation	2 hrs
British Civilisation	2 hrs	English Literature	2 hrs
US Civilisation	2 hrs	US Literature	2 hrs
English Literature	2 hrs	African Literature	2 hrs
US Literature	2 hrs		
Arabic Language & Literature	2 hrs		

*As listening and speaking classes are made up of small groups of students, allotted time is actually shorter; about 45 to 60 minutes a week.

3.2.6 Characteristics of lectures in the English Department

The observation of two regular lectures provided insights into the characteristics of lectures in the English Department. The findings are supplemented by data from the questionnaire. Matching data from the two sources highlight a number of characteristics of lectures. Some of these features may be favourable to the students' lecture comprehension and note taking tasks. One salient discourse types, for instance, is overt rhetorical marking which should make the lecturers' discourse easier to comprehend. Although the overall structure of the two observed lectures did not appear quite clear to both observers, the lecturers used overt marking of their discourse to indicate topic direction using meta-statements, titling and connectors. Topic boundaries were also marked by pauses, though the latter sometimes took excessive lengths.

Failure to identify markers necessary to build a mental representation of the overall structure of the lecture eventually undermines the listener's ability to undertake a number of essential higher-level listening tasks. A crucial one among these tasks is the *selection* of key information from the input text. Both the students and the lecturers agree about the availability of rhetorical signals in the lectures. In-built markers throughout the text can be used to identify topic change. 45.5% of the students say that the lecturers often/always use intonation, pitch, and speed to show the important parts of the lectures (75% of the lecturers report so).

The use of visual support may help listeners make up for the failure to use rhetorical signalling efficiently to achieve a global representation of the lecture. But 68.5% of the students and 75% of faculty report that drawings, maps, etc are never/rarely used in lecture halls. The lecturers do help the listeners by putting useful notes on the board. These notes, nonetheless, may be quantitatively insufficient.

The contribution of the students to the discourse of the lectures corroborated data from the questionnaires. Both lecturers did not often invite questions from the audience. Yet, they frequently did ask rhetoric and interrogative questions. In their turn, the students occasionally directed questions to the lecturers, asked for clarification, repetition and made comments. Often, however, the students were difficult to hear even during the lecture class attended by about 30 students only. The intelligibility of the students' discourse appeared to be quite an acute problem during the second lecture that took place in a large classroom.

The length of the problem increased noticeably when a group of students made a presentation that took up a substantial portion of one lecture. Lecturers usually assign the students to do oral presentations. Speech by peers may often become unintelligible for the students. The observer noted that not only did the presentation suffer from the students' poor pronunciation, misuse of tone, grammatical problems and low pitch but also it turned the lecture towards a reading style, which consequently caused the audience to lose interest. Actually, in both lectures, the students were observed to give little attention to contribution by their peers.

The audience seemed more attentive when the lecturers spoke. A key reason should be the usually better intelligibility of the latter's discourse. During the lecture that took place in a small room, the lecturer was audible practically all the time. Yet, the large room made the second lecturer occasionally difficult to hear. The performance is reversed when it comes to the use of prosodic features. The first lecturer sometimes misused tone and intonation raising when no clear focus was observable; which could mislead listeners. The second lecturer showed better command of tone and stress. As far as the language factor is concerned, the two lecturers were graded at 'appropriate' on both syntax and vocabulary.

Both the observed lectures were *information-driven*; i.e. essentially used for the transmission of knowledge. Hence, narration and exposition of literary analysis, defining, comparing and classifying characterised the discourse. Discussion and interactive argumentation hardly appeared in the two lectures. Yet, concerning content, informational density was estimated completely not high in both lectures.

The rather positive formal features in the two lectures combined with a favourable speech rate. Both lecturers spoke at speeds ranging from slow to average. Nonetheless, the key lecture features that really do not contribute to the listeners' comprehension relate more to the lecturers' teaching practices. The lecturers tend to miss opportunities to give help to the students. Provision of the outline of the lectures and summarising the main points in them are quite scarce.

Ineffective use of cues in lectures (rhetorical markers and visual support) could be less detrimental to lecture comprehension should listeners possess and appropriately use adequate *prior knowledge* about the content of the lecture. The lecturers assume a share of the responsibility of activating the listeners' prior knowledge. Yet, *only* 3.5% of the students reported that lecturers always ask them questions about previous lectures. This contrasts with the 63.5% of the lecturers who reported that they always do. Both groups of respondents coherently responded (maintaining the same contrast) to another similar item; 39.5% of the students said that the lecturers never/rarely review the content of previous lectures while 66.5% of the lecturers claim they always do. These two items may be instances of 'contentious' questions in self-report. Besides face-saving reasons, the discrepancy may be ascribed to the subjects' misperception of review frequency, the lecturers' overestimation of their reviews, or most probably to both. The two lecturers did put questions to the listeners. But these questions were not directed to the activation of the students' prior knowledge. The lecturers were not observed to connect the

lecture of the day to previous lectures. Apart from review of previous lectures, 41% of the students claim that the lecturers never/rarely relate the topic of the lecture to their prior knowledge; while 83.5% of the lecturers say they often/always do. As for building the students' prior knowledge, one lecturer did not give out any handouts to the students. The second lecturer did provide handouts but these were distributed during the lecture itself.

Some students complain about the lack of outlines and introductions in lecturers. *Only* a few of the students reported that lecturers always give the outline of lectures on the board (8.5%) or orally (16.5%; 50% and 33.5% for the lecturers). Finally, both students and lecturers may be missing opportunities to check comprehension of lecture content and work out problems of understanding. Interaction may be insufficient as up to 27.5% of the students say that the lecturers never/rarely encourage them to take part in class discussions.

In conclusion, this chapter presented the procedures of data treatment. The data collected by the five research instruments were treated to check validity and let patterns emerge. Data from combined sources were used to document six areas of interest, which are performance in lecture comprehension and lecture note taking measures, survey of lecture comprehension and lecture note taking strategy use, instruction in listening comprehension, and finally, characteristics of academic lectures in the English Department. The questionnaire data were used to supplement and cross-check results from the direct probes, i.e. the Test of Lecture Comprehension, the analysis of the subjects' lecture notes, lecture observation and the analysis of instruction in listening comprehension.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

Chapter four: Discussion

This chapter reviews the different components of the present study. The present discussion is primarily structured around the seven questions formulated for this study. We discuss the research design, the study, the data collected and their interpretation.

4.1 Discussion around the research questions

4.1.1 Research Question 1: How would the subjects perform in a test of key lecture comprehension strategies?

The Test of Lecture Comprehension assesses second year students` lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. Anyone of the content modules could have been used as source of input text. By the time they sat for the test (the end of their second year of studies), the subjects had attended lectures on linguistics, cultural studies, British and United States civilization and literature. The choice went for civilization on account of better accessibility and representation. Data from the questionnaire indicate that the students find civilization easier to comprehend than literature and linguistics (see Appendix I: The Questionnaire aggregated responses). Besides, narrative discourse is common in lectures in the English Department. Up to 84% of the lecturers said their lectures always/often include this type of discourse.

The accessibility of the lectures used in the present study was assessed by the researcher, two lecturers and one listening instructor from the English Department. They examined the transcripts and assigned a grade of accessibility to second year students from 0 (= very easy) to 10 (= very difficult). Table 2.3 below summarises the results of the evaluation. The average degree of accessibility in four lectures is 3.66, 2.66, 3 and 3.66

respectively. Even if a ± 1 fluctuation is allowed as the evaluation was summative, the four lectures' degree of accessibility would fall within the range [1.66 - 4.66]; i.e., from very easy to slightly under average. It can be concluded that the lectures used in the present study were accessible to average second year students in the English Department, and thus are in this respect, valid input for the Test of Lecture Comprehension.

Table 2.3
The Test of lecture comprehension
accessibility of the input lectures assessed by three teachers

The Lectures	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Average Scale
Lecture 1: The Victorian Age	5	4	2	3.66
Lecture 2: The Industrial Revolution	5	3	1	3
Lecture 3: The Age of Imperialism	4	4	3	3.66
Lecture 4: Motives of British Imperialism	3	3	2	2.66
Average Scale	4.5	3.5	2.25	3.24

Key:
Teacher 1 had been lecturing on phonetics to first, second and third year students for more than five years.
Teacher 2 had been lecturing on cultural studies to first year students for three years.
Teacher 3 had taught listening comprehension to second year students for three years.

The lack of verification of the subjects' prior knowledge about the content of the test lectures however represents a threat of correct responses being at least partly due to such knowledge rather than to the wider lecture comprehension ability. For this reason, some researchers (Dunkel 1988) expressed concerns about the validity of results when prior knowledge is not controlled. The subjects' prior knowledge of the topic area influences the quality and the quantity of their performance in comprehension tests. The subjects will use what they know about the topic rather than what they understood from the test input (Rost 1994: 96-7).

As we were looking for ways to check prior knowledge, the task appeared complex and elusive. We wanted to find a procedure that would not unduly lead the subjects towards the topics of the test lectures and thus increase the effect of prior knowledge. Finally, it turned out that no procedure is available that could be smoothly integrated in the regular course or examination. Short of a valid measure of prior knowledge, it was made sure that the test lectures will treat topics not yet tackled in the regular course of British Civilisation.

Cheating on the test is another possible factor that must be considered. During the Test of Lecture Comprehension, some of the testees were observed not to strictly abide by the instructions that were given to them about putting the answers at exactly the time indicated. They would delay writing their responses to hear further text looking for clues. Actually, one of the weaknesses of MCQ is higher risks of cheating. Nevertheless, the following safeguards were applied to moderate those risks:

1. The subjects sat for the test in individual language laboratory booths;
2. The subjects could see the test papers only when the time to complete the tasks came;
3. The test directions were not written in the test papers so that all subjects could start completing the task when allowed only;
4. The test tasks were set on two different sheets so that to reduce possibility of the testees going back to do previous tasks. The first sheet was collected before the second one was given out to the testees.

Safeguards two, three and four permitted a single pace for all, a collective proceeding from one task to another. And this kept everyone completing the test tasks simultaneously. These measures must have reduced risks of illicit behaviour like cheating and ensured that the testees were set to complete the test tasks in the appropriate time.

Apart from risks of illicit behaviour during the Test of Lecture Comprehension, another -not illicit this time- factor needs to be considered; namely, the 'chance factor'. Objective test items of the type used in the present study allow for chance to impact on test performance. The use of the open-ended item in all the MCQ test tasks certainly reduced chancy responses to a significant extent. Close-ended tasks were chosen for the present study because a test of language comprehension must rely the least on productive ability. The subjects' expression ability may influence the quality and the quantity of their performance in comprehension tests. Another subsidiary motive behind choosing close-ended tasks relates to procedural reliability and practicality. As the number of the testees was high (300) for one rater, close-ended tasks offered the extra benefit of being more amenable to objective, accurate and less time consuming correction and grading.

Greater 'confidence' about results from the test requires a multiplication of tests with different input texts and different elicitation procedures. This is the rationale behind using four lectures in the Test of Lecture Comprehension and replication of the test with two classes of second year students, 2001 and 2002. Still, risks to the reliability of the test could come from other sources like correction and grading of the test subjects' papers. In this respect, the test features two safeguards. The first is the use of objective test item types, which enhances the safety of the test from intra-rater inconsistency. The second is limiting the correction to one rater; the test papers were corrected by the researcher.

The Test of Lecture Comprehension may by no means account for the subjects` ability level on all the components identified as salient and specific in lecture comprehension. Actually, no test of language constructs whatever its length can claim to do so. On the nine lecture comprehension strategies tapped , overall, the subjects' performance in the Test of Lecture Comprehension is quite low. For the whole population of subjects, the combined average score

falls to 31.65%. The subjects demonstrated an insufficient ability levels. For instance, 79% of the subjects failed on Recognising Overall Structure of Lecture and up to 89% were not successful in Using Markers to Identify Topic Change. Moreover the scores obtained by the subjects may partly be ascribed to a 20.2% potential that the correct answers may be due to chance merely. The chance factor combines with an occasionally observed and potential 'cheating factor' and to a lesser extent with a potential prior-knowledge factor to suggest that the subjects' scores on the Test of Lecture Comprehension (see Tables 3.5 A and B, page 81) could well be at lower values. These scores suggest that the subjects demonstrated an insufficient ability levels on the nine lecture comprehension strategies tapped.

4.1.2 Research Question 2: Do the subjects actually *use* key efficient lecture comprehension strategies?

Researchers have so far no *direct* access to information about the students' lecture comprehension strategies. How can, for instance, research evaluate the students' ability to use prior knowledge to understand new information in lectures? Introspection may be an acceptable answer here, yet a partial one only. While self-report methods may open windows on mental data, care must be exercised when dealing with such subjectivity-influenced research tools. Subjects who are asked to report on their abilities and strategies may be under the subjective drive of 'embellishment'. Even when teachers report on their students' ability and performance, they might equate the latter with their own teaching ability and performance. The subjects might respond as they think they ought to or would like to sound.

The analysis and interpretation of data from the questionnaire proved to be quite a challenge. The questionnaire generated a huge amount of data. Credit given to questionnaire data about strategy use differed according to

respondents' category and the meaningfulness of the statistics in relation to the research issues as well. For instance, with reported inefficient lecture comprehension or note taking strategies, response percentages around 20 % are worthy of consideration. The reason is, as far as we are ultimately concerned with the learning and teaching of academic listening comprehension in the English Department, instruction should cater for the learners who need assistance well above those who may be able to manage on their own. If 20% students appear to have a problem with their learning, they deserve to be helped out by the institution. In the same line of argument, extreme categories of questionnaire responses may be more significant than 'safety responses' ('sometimes' and 'neutral'). Inaccuracy, if any, in responses to questionnaire items may also come from an objective factor. The subjects' meta-linguistic knowledge about listening comprehension may induce them to think that they are actually applying it.

Concerning the second question, (Do the subjects *use* efficient lecture comprehension strategies?), The data from the questionnaire show that the subjects' low performance in the Test of Lecture Comprehension (mean score: 31.56%) goes hand in hand with the use of inefficient lecture comprehension strategies. Too many subjects reported that they were not using efficient listening strategies especially the exploitation of rhetorical markers (90% of the questionnaire respondents) and selection (72% of the questionnaire respondents).

The subjects may have problems identifying the markers to predict or recognise topic and topic change. Seemingly, the subjects may miss the first major marker; i.e. the introduction. The latter usually contains the information that should help listeners know what the topic is and probably predict the overall structure of the lecture. The crucial task of r*ecognising the overall structure of the lecture* depends extensively on decoding the discourse markers. The failure to exploit available markers undermines the all-important listener's

task of forming a mental representation of the overall structure of the lecture. The task underpins two ultimate interrelated tasks in lecture learning; namely, synthesising meaning and note taking. The failure probably stems in the use of inefficient strategies. *Only* 12.5% of the students report that they always think about the organisation of the lecture.

4.1.3 Research Question 3: How would the subjects perform in a lecture note taking task?

The most important challenge to research consists in achieving an acceptable validity. Procedural validity is an aspect that contributes to the content validity of research tools. Our subjects were not aware that their notes would be collected and evaluated. They were attending a regular lecture or examination. Dunkel (1988:277) underscores the need for a "naturalistic investigation of notes students take during actual lectures…". In the case of the notes taken on observed lectures, the subjects had true interest in taking notes. The fact that the observed lecture was the last one before the exam may have increased that motivation. Yet, such interest was not artificially pushed to undue proportions. The subjects were not informed that their notes would be collected lest they modify their normal note taking behaviour under the stress of being investigated.

For better reliability of the notes' analysis, the present study used a lecture note quality matrix that represents an attempt to combine two divergent drives: 1- the use of quick and objective measures that contribute to the reliability of the work; and 2- The need to know more about the quality of the notes for higher validity. Furthermore, reducing threats to reliability is a welcome by-product from using a single rater.

The definition of indexes for the evaluation of the quality of notes was not an easy task. Some subjects took very few notes on the research note taking task. Fewer notations may not always reflect comprehension and/or note taking problems. Only with appropriate certainty that the subjects chose to take notes and earnestly tried to do so can we consider their notes possible predictors of comprehension and note taking ability. Then, even if we had the subjects take notes in naturalistic settings, the values of the notes as indicator of lecture comprehension largely depend on the way they are analysed. The psychometric approach to note efficiency based on counting notations or information units is prone to criticism. The quality of notes is better reflected by efficiency, i.e. whatever the strategy employed by the subject, providing there are a few notations, the note taking ability level shows up in taking down the most of the input text by the smallest number of notes.

The analysis of the notes taken by the subjects on observed lectures as well as lectures used as input for the Test of Lecture Comprehension reflects low ability in note taking. The subjects obtained low notes' efficiency scores. The average score of note quality is 45 / 100 (See Table 3.6 - The Subjects' notes: evaluation of the notes from the observed lecture, page 88, and Tables 4.7 - The subjects' lecture notes- evaluations of notes on the test of lecture comprehension, pages 89-90). Low notes' efficiency scores may suggest that many subjects' have problems particularly with identifying key information in academic lecture. The subjects often resorted to a verbatim note-all strategy. The usual consequences in such conditions are panic to catch up with natural speech rate, inappropriate selection of information, lack of structure in the notes, inconsistent and unclear abbreviations and symbols and illegible handwriting. 81.5% of the questionnaire respondents complained about difficulties in comprehending *their* own notes because the latter are incomplete.

The subjects' overall performance in the lecture note taking task was indeed lower than average. Ultimately, notes similar to those analysed in the present study would not be very useful for these students to review lecture content and more importantly for efficient learning from academic lectures.

4.1.4 Research Question 4: Do the subjects use key efficient note taking strategies?

The use of the questionnaire brings up the issue of the credibility of some data from the teachers. The questionnaire elicits the teachers' assessment and views about their students' lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. For objective reasons, these cannot be expected to be more than global judgements. Besides, it must be acknowledged that some teachers reported on the students in the English Department including but not exclusively limited to the actual subjects of the present study. In addition, the teachers' assessment of the students' strategies probably results more from observation of indirect performance, i.e. the students' performance in essays, discussions, informal meetings, and regular exams than from direct observation of the specific lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. Therefore, for questionnaire items on the students' lecture comprehension and note taking strategy use and ability level, the students' responses come unequivocally first in terms of value.

Data from the questionnaire about the reported use of lecture note taking strategies are consistent with the analysis of the notes. Significant numbers of the subjects reported using inefficient strategies or not using better ones. For instance, not more than 45.5% wonder whether lecture information is important to note down. The responses from combined sources (students and teachers) also say that too many subjects resort to a note-all strategy. Only 33% reported that they use selection and 38% try to write down full sentences, etc. The

students may be struggling to note down everything during lectures. But, at some point, some of them cannot not keep up with the pace, and end up taking few notes. Therefore, speech rate causes concerns to the respondents. Effective strategy use is also scarce when it comes to notes editing and review. Many subjects do not utilize other sources like handouts and readings to improve their lecture notes. Besides, they rarely cooperate with peers to complete their notes.

The subjects whose notes were analysed come from different language ability level as indicated by scores on regular exams and the Test of Lecture Comprehension. They may be representative enough of the population of second year students to reflect its problems with lecture note taking.

4.1.5 Research Question 5: If the subjects are not using efficient strategies, is instruction contributing to this state of affairs? In other words, does instruction in the Department of English provide for adequate training in lecture comprehension and note taking?

The Department of English is expected to provide its students with training in the lecture comprehension and note taking skills that will enable them to learn efficiently. The first year course of listening is the most critical to the students who are about to embark on intensive learning of content about literature, civilisation and linguistics in the second year of their studies. The course seems to teach theoretical knowledge *about* listening mainly and apparently does not include training in the use of effective note taking and lecture comprehension strategies. The students encountered a few strategies and practised some of these. But that knowledge was probably not sufficiently internalised to be used automatically and easily considering the performance of many subjects on regular listening exams and the Test of Lecture Comprehension.

The acquisition of strategies requires much practice, feedback and assessment. Hamp-Lyons (1983:116) noted that "The strategy required for understanding an outline, let alone making one, is at a very difficult conceptual level. It seems unlikely that one lesson would be enough to teach it satisfactorily". Instructor A who was in charge of the first year course said in the additional notes to the questionnaire that, throughout the years he had been teaching listening, the students usually failed to put into practice the theoretical knowledge they had been taught. More focused and structured training and practice is needed to build the students' capacity to use listening strategies for greater comprehension.

Beside, in order to learn how to listen efficiently to academic lectures, the students probably need to practise listening specifically with the target format and content. According to the data collected from the analysis of course notes and the questionnaires, listening instruction does not feature extended monologues or topics from content modules that could ensure increasing approximation of target settings and tasks. How better can learners practise lecture comprehension than by working on real academic lectures during listening classes? The frequent use of songs in listening courses in the English Department may not be an appropriate tool. Songs feature a different discourse and lexis compared to lectures. Murphey (1992:771) analysed the discourse of pop songs and pointed out to conversational discourse, vague references (unspecified you-referents), syntactic and lexical simplicity and a slow speech rate (75.5 words per minute or 1/2 normal speech rate). Listening comprehension in the English Department may not be including input that is more relevant to study academic listening.

Input for training in lecture comprehension should approximate authentic lectures in both format and content. The absence of relatedness among listening input texts might not provide good opportunities for training in building and using prior knowledge. Maintaining continuity gives a frame of reference, which is favourable to lecture comprehension as authentic lectures usually build upon each other. Thus unrelated short texts, songs and leisure listening should not be expected to contribute to building academic listening ability.

As for the pedagogic tasks themselves, most of them tend to *test* understanding. Moreover, discrete elicitation procedures such as filling gaps may be excessively based on formal recognition. These procedures may also not promote the learning of efficient lecture comprehension strategies. They presuppose a rather excessive attention to particular linguistic forms. These forms may not be crucial for the listening objectives especially when the missing part(s) are based on no clear rationale. As lectures function as a mode of knowledge transmission in the English department, listening to the main informational units and supporting details essential for the individual listener's comprehension of the lecture becomes the most relevant global listening strategy.

Teaching practices during listening classes as well as lectures may instil inefficient strategies like verbatim note taking. Students may be implicitly encouraged to sit back and leave the lecturers dictate what information is worth retaining. 48.5% of the combined respondents said whole sentences were often dictated during lectures. Besides, 78.5% of the students and the listening instructors reported that new vocabulary is systematically explained during listening classes. Such practices may not contribute to effective training in listening strategies especially selection and guessing meaning of unknown words. The questionnaire data indicate for instance that 57.5% of the students believe it is helpful to pay attention to everything lecturers say.

According to the data collected by the analysis of course notes and the questionnaires, listening instruction received by the subjects overlooked most of the strategies identified as characteristic of academic lecture comprehension and note taking. Figure 4.1 below lists those strategies.

1. Anticipating content from the title of the lecture
2. Formulating a Conceptual Framework of the Lecture
3. Attend, identify and use lecture introductions, outlines, board notes to predict and find out the topic and sub-topics of the lecture.
4. Use course outlines and assigned readings (handouts, books) to build prior knowledge about the lecture
5. Identifying and Comprehending the Informational Content
6. to identify or infer links between interdependent propositions
7. use discourse, lexical and syntactic schemata to anticipate input
8. integrating information incoming through other media
9. Triangulation of the Status of Information
10. Attending and recognising non-verbal cues as markers of attitude and emphasis
11. Monitoring One's ComprehensionAnticipating content from the introduction of the lecture
12. Knowing what is the exact topic
13. Following the development of the topic
14. Identifying connections between ideas
15. Distinguishing main from secondary points
16. Identifying key words
17. Understanding the speaker's implied meaning
18. Using prior knowledge to understand the new information
19. Using visuals to understand the lecture
20. Asking questions to lecturers
21. Asking for repetition / clarification
22. Dealing with lectures dense with new information
23. Guessing the meaning of unknown words
24. Ignoring unknown words
25. Summarising lecture content mentally (synthesising)
26. Identifying ideas and their paraphrase
27. Noting information in one's words (paraphrasing)
28. Paying attention to and noting board notes
29. Using regular abbreviations / symbols
30. elimination of small words that are not essential to the information
31. Note down lecture content in a format that indicate relationships between pieces of information
32. Rewriting their lecture notes
33. Using teacher's handouts, other students' notes or readings about the topic to complete notes to complete notes
34. Using notes review strategies (constructing an outline writing a summary)
35. Editing lecture notes (expanding, omitting digressions, organizing, clear up
36. missing or confusing information by counselling lecturers

Figure 4.1 Listening instruction in the English department -list of key strategies not treated

4.1.6 Research Question 6: Does the curriculum in the English Department provide for the development of the students' lecture comprehension and note taking ability?

Analysis of the official statement of the listening syllabus was used to inform Question 6. Both the content and the layout of the official statement of the listening syllabus indicate the level of attention given to listening comprehension. The statement is marred with ambiguity and irrelevant references. Good syllabi statements are much more explicit about policy, objectives and guidelines for practice. They offer guidelines to keep teachers working within a framework. Examined against these basic criteria, the listening syllabus statement can hardly be found explicit or helpful to listening teachers.

A syllabus is useful to assist instructors in grading, sequencing and assessing instruction. The non-availability of such assistance cannot be helpful especially to the predominantly junior teachers who are often assigned listening courses in Algerian English departments. The official statement for the listening syllabus in the English Department says little about what listening instruction should be provided to the students of English. Besides, the statement makes no reference at all to lecture comprehension and note taking.

On the contrary, statements of other modules like writing and grammar are more explicit. Ostler (1980:489) pointed to the emphasis on writing in American universities at the expense of other language areas. Note taking in particular suffers a lot of neglect in tertiary education. Ganske (1981) says that although note taking is an "important representation of the knowledge transition that takes place in university learning environment, it has largely been ignored…" (Cited in Denkel 1988:278; also Pierce 1989). What might explain neglect of lecture comprehension and note taking is the implicit assumption that

these are learnt automatically via exposure and therefore are easy to teach and learn (Mendelsohn 1994, cited in Cornaire 1998:118, Hamp-Lyons 1983).

4.1.7 Research Question 7: The wider issue of theis research is learning from the lectures in the English Department. A related question is the following: Do lectures in the English Department contain features that would assist the students in their effort to comprehend lecture content and record it in notes?

Lecture observation and the questionnaire informed research question 7. The investigation of lectures in the English Department is an instance of research that was affected by the environment in which it was conducted. Research that involves human participants requires cooperativeness from the participants should the research stand chances to be informative. A positive research atmosphere might be ascribed to the existence of some ‘research culture’ that would mean acceptance, trust and familiarity with research work on the part of researchers, subjects and administrators. It could have been quite helpful if, for example, we had been able to observe more lectures. Nevertheless, concerns over the acceptance of the lecturers to such unfamiliar intrusion reduced the possibilities to two lectures. In a similar context, Beddek (2000:53) complained that her attempts to use the interview failed with the students of French. She ascribes this failure to the subjects’ reluctance to speak with the interviewer because of a lack of trust.

The data collected by the observation of two authentic lectures in combination with the questionnaire responses about lecture style provided a description of the context in which the subjects were learning academic content. The characteristics of lectures are important to the present study because they impinge on the subjects’ learning from academic lectures. Matching data from the two sources highlight a number of features. Lectures to which the subjects are exposed appear to present the following characteristics:

1. Rhetorical marking to indicate topic direction using meta-statements, titling and connectors, topic boundaries marked by pauses is available. This was concluded by studies on the discourse of non-native speakers (e.g. Williams1992: 693).
2. overall structure of the lectures is often not quite clear to many subjects; though
3. The use of visual support like drawings, maps, etc. is scarce ;
4. The lecturers help the listeners by putting notes on the board. These notes, nonetheless, are quantitatively insufficient;
5. The students' intelligibility is often a problem, especially during oral presentations which are quite frequent;
6. The quality of sound especially in large rooms makes lecturers and students occasionally difficult to hear;
7. Outlines of the lectures are rarely given;
8. summaries of the main points are quite scarce;
9. Questions about previous lectures and review of the content of previous lectures are not frequent;
10. Lecturers scarcely give out any handouts to the students to build the students' prior knowledge. Handouts are sometimes distributed during or at the end of the lecture; and
11. Interaction should be more frequent. Both students and lecturers may be missing opportunities to check comprehension of lecture content and work out problems of understanding.

Academic lectures in the English Department seem to lack an optimal discourse for lecture comprehension. Many tools and lecturing techniques that would enhance the listeners' comprehension are often missing from the lecture hall.

4.2 The Issue of generalising of findings

This study investigated two classes of second year students in the English Department. Could the insights gained here be extended to other classes of second year students, to other levels and other departments of English in Algeria?

The issue of extending the relevance of the data collected about the subjects in the present study to wider related populations deserves consideration. In order to determine the degree of similarity between the subjects and students in the English departments in the Algiers University, we compared the questionnaire responses of the listening teachers from the Algiers English department to their colleagues in Blida. Table 4.2 below shows the compacted results of the comparison per questionnaire section. Average deviation of responses by Algiers' listening teachers from Blida's listening teachers ranges from 17.85% to 23.26% of the possible range of deviation. The standard deviations of the two groups are quite close. The statistics indicate similarity of issues related to the students' lecture comprehension and note taking in both departments.

Table 4.2
The Questionnaire- response comparison between listening teachers from Blida and Algiers English Departments

	# Items	Blida Listening Teachers		Algiers Listening Teachers		Combined			
Questionnaire		*m*	SD	*m*	SD	T-Test	AveDev	MinDev	MaxDev
S1	11	3.1515	0.9467	2.9697	0.8814	0.3307	22.97%	0.00%	66.67%
S2	20	3.0238	0.89278	2.6508	1.0104	0.1116	20.68%	0.00%	59.09%
S3	19	3.6405	0.9087	3.4123	1.0035	0.0968	23.26%	4.63%	66.67%
S4	23	2.2101	0.5778	2.1667	0.5918	0.4032	17.85%	0.00%	44.44%

Key:

S1 = Section one on aural comprehension and note taking strategies
S2 = Section two on instruction in listening comprehension
S3 = Section three on attitudes/metacognitive knowledge about lecture comprehension and note taking strategies
S4 = Section four about self ratings
AveDev, MinDev and MaxDev: Respectively, ratio percentage of the average, minimum and maximum deviation of the responses by Algiers'listening teachers from those of Blida's listening teachers.

Besides, the population targeted by the present study consists of a rather homogenous group. The students in Algerian English departments pertain to the same group age (17-22). They share the same language background with Arabic and/or Berber as first language. They also share the same school background (Algerian public educational system). And they received roughly similar instruction in EFL during pre-university years of study (instructional objectives stated by the official syllabus of English).

Further research is definitely needed to study other departments of English throughout Algeria. More research is also needed to supplement the present study and provide a better understanding of the issue researched. The Test of Lecture Comprehension attempted to assess higher-level strategies. Nevertheless, deficiencies revealed by the subjects' performance could partly be ascribed to problems at lower level skills such as phonological discrimination, lexical knowledge, morphological and syntactic knowledge. Data from the questionnaire reflect difficulties that may be engendered by other areas of the listening ability that are beyond the scope of the present study. To illustrate this point, 45.5% of the students said that their ability to understand contracted speech was low. This suggests the probability of low-order aural strategies undermining the use of high-order strategies. More research on lecture comprehension should be conducted from different perspectives and using different research methodologies in a way that may reduce bias due to inherent weaknesses in the research tools.

To conclude this chapter, it should be made clear that, care is required in the interpretation of findings in the light of potential limitations of both ethnographic and psychometric instruments. A substantial part of the time and efforts spent on this study was devoted to protect and enhance validity and reliability. For more triangulation, introspective data collection methods are used especially to collect data that can hardly be gathered otherwise; such as, listening strategies, learning styles, attitudes, etc. One should obviously be

aware of the fact that indirect data through perception and self-evaluation may be a little less credible than direct data from tests, observation and document analysis. Higher reliability of self-report, therefore, was sought in the present study from the integration of safeguards and cross-checking with other data collection procedures.

Data from the five research instruments seem to point to some signs of insufficient ability of significant numbers of the subjects in understanding and taking notes on academic lectures. Matching data seem to indicate that many students use poor lecture comprehension and note-taking strategies. Listening instruction was found hardly providing for adequate training. The official statement of the syllabus of listening comprehension makes no reference to teaching note taking and most of the key lecture comprehension or listening strategies. Moreover, several features that should help the listeners/note takers in their tasks are often scarce in the lectures.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLICATIONS

Chapter Five: Implications

Deficiencies in listening instruction in the English Department as discussed under Section 3.2.5 herein suggest that requirements for effective learning/teaching need to be reinforced in the Department of English of the University of Blida. This chapter spells out key requirements for a more effective training in lecture comprehension and note taking. We discuss issues related to pedagogic tasks, input text and the teaching approach. Then, the discussion reaches out to other factors that could contribute to the ultimate goal of learning effectively from content lectures. Recommendations for listening instructors, lecturers and curriculum administrators are made to help optimize their contributions to the students' academic success.

5.1 Suggestions for better lecture comprehension & note taking instruction

5.1.1 The Recommended lecture comprehension and note taking syllabus

Chapter three above presents the areas that could be improved in the listening instruction in the English Department in order to enhance the students' lecture comprehension and note taking abilities. The apparent lack of clear objectives for the current listening instruction (see section 3.2.5) makes defining these objectives an urgent task. A survey of the learners' needs is necessary to inform the process of curriculum construction (Ostler 1980 and Robertson 1984). For more than a decade up to the time of the present study, no needs analysis was conducted in the English Department of the University of Blida. A periodic evaluation of programs should take place to ensure that the students are taught what they need. Timely analysis of the learners' needs can ensure an appropriate match between the standing courses and the needs of successive classes of student populations.

The findings from the present study (see Chapter three) point to some of the students' needs in the English Department in terms of lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. Indeed, the subjects' responses to the questionnaire items as well as their performance in the Test of Lecture Comprehension, and less directly, the analysis of the listening course notes may indicate some of those needs. In the light of data from these instruments, one may spell out a framework for a more explicit and comprehensive syllabus of listening in the English Department.

The syllabus proposed here revolves around identified needs that would represent the learning objectives for listening classes. Listening courses must train the students in using better strategies. Within the syllabus of listening, the lecture comprehension and note taking component should consist in introducing and practicing these strategies. Figure 5.1 proposed by the researcher below presents key lecture comprehension & note taking strategies that we recommend along with some suggested learning tasks. These strategies were identified in the Review of the literature as essential to learning from academic lectures.

The strategies suggested in Figure 5.1 below represent a common and adjustable base syllabus for all levels of instruction from first to third year. For each level of instruction and for each group of learners, listening instructors should make decisions about qualitative and quantitative matters. Diagnostic tests would indicate the strategies to be integrated in listening courses for every level. Level/group specifications in terms of priorities and time allocation would thus vary to meet specific needs.

F	Target Skill/Strategy	Type of Listening	Possible Procedure (s)
A	Setting an objective to listening	(Pre) listening	- From the title or opening sentences, learners determine the degree of importance of listening (and taking notes on) the lecture
A	Anticipation (activating schemata)	Reading	- Complete sentence(s) endings with words/phrases
		Listening	- At stops, learners try to tell next word/phrase
		Pre-listening	- Brain storming (title, questions, cue word(s)); Completion of lecture outline.
U	Using prior knowledge	Listening only	- (At unannounced stops) Question: How does what you have just heard relate to your knowledge (how (un) familiar?)
S	Relating lecture to wider contexts	Post-listening	- Question (s) e.g. How does the lecture relate to other (previous) lectures, modules, etc.?
S	Problem solving	Post listening	- Using lecture content to discuss related points, look for answers to wider and/or related questions
A	Synthesising meaning	Listening	- (Stopping at intervals) learners summarise last point.
		Post-listening	- Summarize (orally or in writing) content of lecture
A	Inferring the topic of the lecture	(Post-) listening	- (At stops or at the end of the listening) Learners try to find out the topic (no direct indication in text).
U	Focusing and Identifying key words	Listening	- Learners note down only key words.
		Post-listening	- Learners select key words from a list.
U	Maintaining reference	Listening	- (Stopping after proforms) Question: What does this word (pro-form) refer to?
U	Hypotheses making	Listening	- (Stopping at intervals) learners complete with information that should follow.
A	Prediction/inference: Attending to macro/micro markers to predict up-coming text.	(Post-) listening	- Introducing/practicing rhetorical markers: - Matching markers to their meanings - Identifying markers in text (reading then listening) - (Stopping right after a marker) Predicting next information
A	Following the development of the topic: Identifying topic change	Listening	- Listen to introduction or other portion of text and infer/predict up-coming text. (open) MCQ or "Where is the lecturer heading?" Note down topic, subtopics and markers of topic change as you hear them
A	Recognising & noting down overall structure	Pre-listening	- Put notes into an appropriate structure (e.g. outline)
		Post-listening	- Put (complete or incomplete) notes into a structure (e.g. outline)
A	Listen for/select key information	Listening	- (At stops) Is the previous information important to note? Why? - Fill in table about the text or cloze
A	Note down key information	(Learning)	- Introduce different note taking models - Practice the introduced models with different lecture styles - Discuss effectiveness of the models in relation to lecture styles
		Listening	- Fill in table about the input text - Cloze or Diagram (using words given in disorder)
U	Listen for/select details	Listening	- Fill in table about the text; Cloze
U	Note down details	Listening	- Fill in table about the text; Cloze
		Reducing text	- Introduction, practice and recycling of useful symbols and abbreviations.
S	Attending to visual support	Viewing only (background noise or too low voice)	- Learners watch video sequence with audio off (or listen to a live lecture with background noise or speaker lowering voice) and try to work out the verbal content (monologue or dialogue) on the basis of visual cues.
U	Inferring the meaning of unknown lexical items	Listening and pre/post-listening	Guess the meaning of key words before listening and then listen and check Guess the meaning of key words after listening Guess meaning of key words while listening (stopping just after word).
S	Tolerating ambiguity (using overall structure)	Listening	- Learners practice working out meaning despite unheard or illegible text (due to background noise or other distracter) on the basis of overall structure
S	Identifying & overlooking unnecessary forms	(reading)	- Cross out all unnecessary words in the transcript to reduce the text
S	Identifying & overlooking irrelevant content	(Reading)	- Underline markers of (and/or) irrelevant information; justify.
		Listening	- Note down markers of irrelevant information - (Stopping at short intervals) Learners determine whether the last piece of information is irrelevant and why.
S	Recognising repetition (paraphrase) as an emphasis cue	Listening	Note down markers for repetition in the lecture
		Post-listening / Reading	- Underline markers & cross out repeated information (on transcript of lecture) - Note down only repeated (paraphrased) information
U	Paraphrasing lecture content	Post-listening / listening	-Tick the correct paraphrase - Tick the ideas (paraphrase) you heard in the lecture - Paraphrase heard sentences of text chunks
A	(Establishing a framework of reference) Discerning the attitude of the lecturer	(Post-) listening	(At stops or at the end of the listening) Discuss: - What is the tone (serious, joking, sarcastic, etc.)? - Is the lecturer for or against the content presented? - Is the lecture objective or subjective? - Is there one or different views in the lecture?
U	Editing Notes, immediate	Post-listening	- Learners revise their notes for completion, elaboration and evaluation.
U	Editing & reviewing notes	Post-listening	- Learner pair up or group to discuss their notes.
		Learn note models	- Practice and recycling of useful techniques for editing and reviewing notes.

Figure 5.1 Recommended lecture comprehension & note taking strategies & suggested learning tasks

Key: F = Recommended Frequency (A= always, U = Usually, S = Sometimes) of practice.

5.1.2 The Recommended learning/teaching approach

5.1.2.1 Strategy-based training

The efficiency of training in lecture comprehension and note taking requires the use of appropriate approaches. The students need to acquire strategies to learn from academic lectures. As Miliani (1998:3 & 7) noted, failure in language learning or other types learning may have different reasons. Among these is the poor or perhaps absence of the students' learning strategies. Teaching learning strategies becomes a prerequisite to allow students to be in a situation of success. In this respect, instruction must include more pedagogic tasks that teach rather than test strategies. A word of warning must be said about tasks such as comprehension questions and multiple-choice items that focus on comprehension rather than teach listening strategies. Questions can nevertheless be as pre-listening tasks to activate prior knowledge for instance. Overall, teaching must focus not on the comprehension of particular input texts (Benson 1989) but on acquiring listening strategies that can potentially be used with any lecture.

When appropriate, learning activities should aim at making the learners conscious of their comprehension processes, reflect on them and work to improve their strategies. Explicit and graded learning/teaching of strategies appears to succeed well in listening comprehension (Harper1985 and Cornaire1998:67). However, instruction must culminate in the integration of strategies to respond to authentic listening situations.

Analysis of the current listening instruction the English Department showed that some of the strategies listed in the taxonomy presented in Figure 6.1 above were actually taught. Unfortunately, pedagogic treatment generally did not exceed meta-linguistic presentation, which is surely not the best approach available as, in Klein's (1986:54) words, "…The ability to understand

a language and use it in actual communication is not the same as having a descriptive knowledge of the language". Training in lecture comprehension and note taking strategies must aim at the acquisition of strategies.

Such requirement calls for constant monitoring of the students' learning to check potential shortcomings. Training in strategies should allow for feedback on strategy selection, use and effectiveness. Feedback is important to stimulate both strategy learning and learning strategies. The learners can participate in retrospective group discussions about academic tasks (comprehending lectures, taking notes, etc.) to uncover procedures they unconsciously use. Next, listening instructors would do presentations to develop the learners' knowledge about strategies. The presentation phase should include a rationale for strategy use, description and modelling of the most useful ones (O'malley & Chamot 1996). The next step consists in practising selected strategies via completing tasks calling for the application of specific strategies. Almost concurrently, the learners need to evaluate their own strategy use through monitoring their effect on task outcomes. They may think aloud while completing a task or write down strategies used immediately after the task. Increasingly challenging tasks will incite the learners to develop their strategies, revise old ones or acquire new ones.

5.1.2.2 Content-based instruction

Effective development of lecture comprehension and note taking strategies may also benefit from the integration of academic content. Studies on academic listening (Hamp-Lyons 1983, Lebauer 1984, Hansen & Jensen 1994 and Benson 1994) argue for instruction that expose learners to authentic lectures. Greater content validity represents a key gain for such approach. Benson (1994:421-41) says that language strategies should be subservient to the objectives of learning. The learners should better listen to learn relevant content

rather than listen to comprehend a given text only. Academic listening courses should feature an increasing integration of authentic content to match real lectures. Such content offers authentic contexts to practice the appropriate strategies to deal with the demands of academic lectures. Content-based training has also the credit of boosting the learners' motivation via the use of relevant content (Mohan 1979). The learners would be more attracted to contents relevant to their studies.

Another yet explicit rationale for using target content in lecture comprehension and note taking training relate to building discourse competence. The latter represents a crucial requirement for EFL students (Cohen et al.1979, Tyler 1992 and Williams 1992). EFL students' difficulty to paraphrase others' language was ascribed to discourse-related problems; i.e. the inability to recognise the hierarchical structure of the text (Basham and Rounds 1984). Familiarity with discourse assists listeners in mentally summarising oral language and consequently taking effective notes.

The students of English need to learn the structure of academic lectures, which would enable them to predict discourse and comprehend their content. Such knowledge would better be specific to the target content areas. Training in lecture comprehension and note taking should include discussion of the structure of academic lecture discourse (Hamp-Lyons 1983, Sehara 1989, Weissberg 1980, Zaytoun 1980, Young 1994, Dudley-Evans 1994 and Lebauer's 1984 lecture transcript analysis approach). The course may start out with introducing aspects of the discourse of lectures on literature, civilisation and linguistics. The second part can be devoted to the discussion of these aspects on selected samples. The next phase must leave opportunity for a freer application of the knowledge learnt. The learners would listen to/view taped extracts and report on particular aspects of academic listening. The final phase could consist in listening practice geared towards key discourse features that are then discussed thoroughly.

If the learners need higher explicitness about lecture discourse, they may be directed to read and visually examine transcripts of the lectures rather than listen to them only (Lebauer 1984). The tasks would consist in spotting cues indicating structure, the importance of information, up-coming text and so on, identifying referential devices, cross out repetition and unimportant information. Of course, meaning must be set as the ultimate objective of listening. Focus on formal analysis of lecture discourse should be kept as a means to the end of comprehension and acquire comprehension and note taking strategies.

5.1.2.3 Self-Study

The crucial importance of lecture comprehension and note taking in the English Department makes their development a matter of urgent priority. Right at the outset of their learning, the students are expected to deal with academic lectures. In addition, in the light of the numerous lacks found in the listening instruction in the English Department, a considerable amount of work remains to be done to equip the students with efficient lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. However, in order to avoid struggle over time allocation and teacher availability, measures could be taken to promote self-instruction and autonomous learning with a varying degree of institutional control. Self-instruction can supplement classroom work (Rost 1996, Mason 1994, Benson 1994 and Baillargeon 1993). Teachers of listening comprehension can, for instance, provide suggested learning tasks, select stimulating lectures, plan realistic and preferably individualized goals, give assignments and deadlines and appropriate feedback to individualize learning and maintain interest and focus.

5.1.2.4 Task specifications

Listening courses in the English Department will succeed in the task of training the students in essential lecture comprehension and note taking strategies to the extent that the teaching approach, pedagogic tasks and input texts contribute efficiently towards that goal. Good academic listening tasks share most of the traits that can be found in sound language pedagogy. In the upcoming discussion, we shall focus on those traits specifically relevant to enhance lecture comprehension and note taking strategies.

The listening courses should include activities ranging from replicative tasks (using text word for word) towards increasingly integrative tasks (using background knowledge, inferential). In addition, as instruction must be intimately linked to the desired learning outcomes, the first and foremost general requirement for pedagogic tasks is authenticity. All the tasks required from the students to perform in order to learn from academic lectures must be translated into pedagogic tasks. Nonetheless, authentic tasks may be broken down into less authentic ones for better accessibility.

Gradation may be needed to make learning tasks accessible and the target skill learnable. Yet, in all cases, pedagogy must take the learners towards tackling lecture tasks and problems on their own. In teaching note taking, for instance, guided notes may be provided in early stages so that the learners search for subordinate ideas and relationships. Then, less and less structure and information is provided until the learners are left to take notes on their own (Otto's 1979 note taking course). Hence, the learners move ahead with more and more autonomy towards building the ability to take efficient notes.

To illustrate how instruction in lecture comprehension and note taking can achieve higher standards of task authenticity, we may consider a number of examples. For instance, in order to incite the learners to take an active attitude

towards unknown words by guessing their meaning, the delivery of the input text would stop after the target items come up and the listeners are asked to guess their meaning. The length of such stops must decrease gradually to approximate authentic on-line monitoring of lexical items. Dealing with the unknown, unheard and lack of comprehension using visual clues also can be practised with naturalistic tasks. The distracting elements of background noise or the speaker's lower or unintelligible voice may be introduced to incite the learners to resort to an interpretation of the visual clues for comprehension.

Better academic listening courses should include tasks that reflect, to the largest possible extent, actual learner's tasks in a lecture context. The pedagogic tasks need to be used to frequencies compatible with skill priority levels as defined by needs analyses and relevant literature.

5.1.2.5 Input text specifications

As advanced under Content-Based Instruction above, effective lecture comprehension and note taking components for listening courses should provide for authentic input contents. The latter must draw upon the content that the learners are currently studying in the regular content modules. Research on lecture comprehension (Rost1996, Lebauer1984) criticised academic listening instruction because the latter generally uses recordings based on read written texts. The Review of the Literature above underscored the specific characteristics of the discourse of academic lectures. In many ways, lectures are different from written discourse and from other types of oral discourse especially in terms of features of orality, length and informational density. Distinctions between oral and written language reinforce the requirement to provide students with materials that feature natural speech, not construed written and read discourse.

Using real lectures in lecture comprehension and note taking training is recommendable over other types of oral discourse for a number of reasons. Moirand (1990:68-112), for instance, suggests that processing discourse in conversational situations might be easier as far as propositional density is concerned. The relative scarcity of new information across turns allows a greater predictability of up-coming input. Besides, current listening instruction tends to use short audio extracts. Hansen and Jensen (1994) insist that learners should be exposed to extended discourse as a regular component of their listening course. They should work on developing strategies to comprehend extended discourse effectively.

Input texts must also be at the appropriate linguistic and conceptual level. Krashen (1981) says linguistic simplification makes input more comprehensible (in Cervantes 1992:767). Input simplification takes several forms such as slower than normal speech rate, exaggerated intonation contours, prolonged pauses, simplified syntax and vocabulary, familiar content and appropriate length (Weissberg 1980). Yet, simplifying input texts should not alter their natural features and give a distorted image of target discourse. Introducing artificial discourse may equate to giving wrong models to learners. The issue of accessibility could be approached in a different way. Rather than simplifying texts, task variables can be adjusted to make the strategy more learnable.

For a sample of activities to illustrate the task features discussed above, the reader may want to review the content of the Test of Lecture Comprehension under Appendix C. The scripts of the lectures used in the test are available under Appendix D. They illustrate some input text features recommended in the previous sections. Moreover, Figure 5.1 above provides a brief procedural description of each suggested pedagogic task.

Besides using sound approaches, and appropriate tasks and input texts, listening instructors can enhance the learners' success in acquiring effective lecture comprehension and note taking strategies by adapting assessment. Assessment of academic listening was usually found irrelevant to actual comprehension situations (Mendelsohn 1994, in Cornaire 1998: 199). Testing must, just like teaching, reflect learning goals. Authentic formats and content need to be integrated in the assessment of the learners' lecture comprehension and note taking.

The suggestions recommended above for lecture comprehension and note taking would better be integrated in the listening module starting from thei first year. The reason is that, the demand for these skills becomes very high at the beginning of the second year. At the time when they are trying to build English language proficiency, the curriculum assigns second year students in the English Department to what may be, at least linguistically speaking, the hardest part of the literature syllabus; i.e. early English and United States literatures.

5.2 Suggestions for lecturers to enhance lecture learning

Developing the learners' lecture comprehension and note taking strategies is much more a means to an end than an end in itself. The ultimate objective is learning content. In this perspective, efforts to promote the students' effective learning from academic lectures should be extended to include lecturing in content modules. In the following section, we are considering a number of measures that lecturers can take to optimize their audience's comprehension of and learning from their own lectures.

As the students of English are expected to comprehend and learn from academic lectures, the best form of assistance the lecturers can provide is ensuring that their lectures take a clear and regular structure. Tyler (1994) compared the discourse of a non-native speaker lecturer to a non-native speaker lecturer and found out that the NS lecturer used prosodic features indicating prominence (intonation, long pauses, etc.) more effectively and consistently (Tyler 1994: 718). Inconsistency in the use of prosodic features was noted during the observation of the lecture on United States literature (see Chapter Three).

Communicatively competent discourse involves sensitivity to the students' aural comprehension and note-taking tasks (Rounds 1987). Lecturers should help building a lexical base consisting of course or lecture specific terms by assigning students to prepare them before a lecture. Handouts given out to students, before lectures start, may serve as markers of emphasis. Lecturers who assign their students to read materials that are related to the lecture may be doing a valuable service to them. Some sort of common prior knowledge sounds a good basis for more successful lecture comprehension. Background knowledge serves as a good support to understand new and often abstract content of academic lectures. Lecturers should therefore better start with reviews of relevant content covered in previous lectures.

During lectures, lecturers may ask questions about the content that had been presented up to a certain point to help listeners stay attentive. Interaction in general is quite important in view of the limited span of human attention as opposed to the substantial length of academic lectures in the English Department (exceeding ninety minutes). Good lecturers also use visual aids, maps, drawings, slides, photographs, etc. to help keep the attention of listeners throughout the span of academic lectures. Visual aids can produce a more engrossing experience and hence favour better recall (Krsul 1989, Pierce 1989). They prompt attentiveness and maintain it through.

Lecturers can also help the audience effort towards more comprehension by reducing the note taking load on them especially when handouts are not available. They can provide a note framework (Dunkel (1988) ‘skeleton notes’) with spaces to be filled by the students with subordinate ideas and illustrations, personal reactions and relations to external knowledge. This tool would allow the students to listen more for better comprehension by lessening the burden of taking notes. The procedure is certainly much better than simply dictating invariably.

While providing handouts and note frameworks might be recommendable only, providing an outline of the lecture at the beginning amounts to a must. This action costs so little in terms of time and effort but usually produces invaluable gains in terms of the whole audience’s comprehension. The lecturer simply tells the listeners what the structure of the lecture is like and thus assists them with the most critical of listener’s tasks, i.e., identify the overall structure of the lecture. The importance of lecture outline is such that it must be not only given orally but also written on the board and kept during the whole lecture.

The previous lecturer’s instruments are particularly helpful to the listeners in view of higher conceptual and linguistic demands of academic lectures. The Review of The Literature, especially section 1.1 points out to potential trouble spots in the content of academic lectures. Both content and language can generate comprehension difficulties. The cultural load, in particular, needs to be monitored. Yet, instead of skipping culturally difficult or offending content as suggested by research (Imhoof 1968, Zughoul 1986, Brooks 1989), lecturers would better be aware of the amount of cultural load that may potentially become problematic to the audience. They may want to address those areas by working out semantic problems.

Attention to content accessibility must be paralleled by monitoring the language. Lecturers need to anticipate lexical and structural items that may undermine the learners' comprehension. They can help their listeners in a number of ways. They can, for instance, check exaggerated speech rate. On the syntactic level, the use of frequent topic reinstatement rather than anaphoric reference would be more helpful to listeners in keeping the continuity of reference. Unnecessary complex structures should better be dropped for simpler and clearer ones. Finally, in vocabulary, lecturers should check unnecessary low-frequency lexical items. Key new words and expressions need to be explained carefully.

Other techniques (cf. easification strategies for increasing lecture input accessibility from Rost 1996: 163 and Weissberg 1980: 137) that assist the listeners' comprehension include providing frequent repetition and rephrasing of key propositions. Lecturers should recycle topics frequently and mark major topics and topic shift clearly. The use of thematic redundancy of key information makes the main points more visible to the listeners. They can also use intonational (voice modulation) and gestural cues for emphasis. Finally, summaries are critical to comprehension and note taking.

Most of all, lecturers need to monitor the audience's comprehension. Comprehension checks should be integrated in the discourse of lectures more frequently. Interaction with the listeners may highlight understanding problems. Successful lecturing involves the lecturers being able to foster an atmosphere of cooperative interaction. Lecturers should create opportunities for clarification, questions and discussion to ensure that there is at least minimal general comprehension (Rounds 1987 and Rost 1996). They may also want to ask the students to summarise (the main points of) the lecture towards its end. The summaries may reflect the status of audience's understanding and call for the lecturer's intervention, when needed, to address comprehension problems.

5.3 Recommendations for curriculum and program administrators

In a very emotional and sensitive account, Zamel (1989) reports on a good teacher's anxiety to draw attention to a very important issue: Academic failure that is induced by the barriers created by educational context itself. Understanding the sources of difficulties and frustration will help us to see the students, in Zamel's (1989:145-6) words, "...as individuals with promise and potential". Reductive assumptions about academic requirements and mechanistic approaches to curriculum just push those students to the 'boundary' and deprive them from experiencing academic success.

In the light of the need to improve the students' lecture learning strategies, time resources available to develop study skills like lecture comprehension and note taking may be limited. Positive contribution from the other curricular components in the English Department becomes welcome. The contents of the listening module and the other modules and the way they are administered can be geared towards mutual contribution. The following section suggests ways that could help achieve intra curricular synergy.

Learning efficiency in the English Department may be improved through greater curricular coherence. Team teaching involving lecturers and listening instructors would sensitise both to the actual needs of the learners. Listening instructors could attend actual lectures and intervene, in appropriate ways that would not disrupt lecturing, to direct work with the students on various aspects of lecture content and structure. These lectures can later become input text for the listening class proper. Learners would discuss instances of misunderstanding or insufficient comprehension with their instructors, and then gets down to search for causes.

Hence, work done in other modules can contribute to the listening courses and each other indeed. For instance, teachers lecturing for third and fourth year students may assign the latter to listen to audio or view video sources and report to classmates about course related topics. Language modules, too, can contribute to the development of the students' lecture comprehension and note taking strategies. Summarising and rewriting lecture notes in writing classes, discussing features of oral language such as elision, assimilation and contracted speech in phonetics classes, and concepts of dialect, register; accents in linguistics sound possible ways of positive contribution.

Being closer to listening, speaking courses may provide the most significant contribution. During speaking classes, students may learn remedial strategies to check and complete comprehension. Students could learn how to ask questions to lecturers so as to clarify unclear points. More significantly, explaining how speakers structure spoken discourse should contribute to building the learners' knowledge about oral discourse (Johns 1981 and Meloni and Thompson 1980). There could also be opportunities to practice inferring meaning from context and staying alert and actively look for clues. A chain story activity in which students tell in turn a part of the story can help develop inference and anticipation strategies.

Finally, the sequencing of the syllabus components of content modules should take into consideration the language ability of the students. The Review of the Literature underscored the potential troublesome features in the content of academic lectures in the English Department. Literature, in particular, appears to be the first source of such problems. This is consistent with the data from the survey questionnaires; lectures on literature were reported more difficult for comprehension than lectures on civilisation. A potential reason may be the introduction of early English and United States literatures in the second year. Content from that part of both literatures tends often to be less accessible than contemporary ones both on conceptual and linguistic grounds.

Therefore, it may be more sensible to move away from the long-established chronological order (Slih 1989 and Krsul 1989 actually calling for a reversal of the order) of literary works to ensure they are accessible to learners.

In conclusion, Chapter five reflects our interest in making the learning of academic content in the English department the most fruitful possible. Developing a strategic competence especially to deal with comprehension challenges is crucial to EFL students. The Review of the literature and the findings obtained in the present research informed the construction of the framework proposed y the researcher in this chapter for training the students of English in academic listening. Knowledge about the complex and elusive process of comprehension is probably still not thorough enough to justify authoritative pedagogical practices and materials. Nonetheless, good listening courses that aim at developing the students' lecture comprehension and note taking must meet some basic quality requirements. Input contents and tasks should approximate as much as possible authentic academic contents and tasks. Learning tasks must promote the learners' autonomy in dealing with the lecture-related tasks. Input texts should give the students opportunities to practice listening and note taking strategies that are required in lecture halls.

Yet, as the learners' needs in terms of strategies may change, learning objectives (and course content consequently) may not be expected to stay fixed. Listening instructors should use regular tests, assignments and class work observations to identify and address changing students' needs. The latter must be integrated in a clearly stated syllabus especially in terms of their priority to handling content modules.

Bearing in mind that class time allotted to listening courses in Algerian English departments is the lowest (about an hour per week) and that increasing that time for training in academic listening may not be plausible, self-study and curricular coordination may be a practical answer. Other curricular components

could strengthen training in academic listening. Listening instructors and lecturers would better work together to optimize learning with available resources. Besides, other modules especially speaking, phonetics and writing could include work that touches on aspects in lecture learning.

Finally, it should be remembered that lecturers play the most prominent role in their students' learning of academic content. The lecturers can structure lectures in forms that optimize students'comprehension. They should also give more frequently the students assignment readings, handouts and lecture outlines to build their students' prior knowledge and activate such knowledge at the outset of each lecture. Handouts given well beforehand, questions, brainstorming besides the use of visuals prepare the audience to comprehend, attract and sustain their attention. Lecturers hence would create discourse that would be more favourable to the audience in their efforts to understand lectures and take good notes.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General conclusion

The need to undertake the present research emerged from the researcher's thirteen-year long experience in the department of English of the University of Blida. Throughout these years, consistent remarks from teachers and sometimes complaints from students nourished a growing awareness of problems in academic achievement in this department. The researcher took a step forward and did a primary investigation of the issue. A brief survey with some teachers at the University of Blida and an analysis of the grades obtained by three successive classes of students in the English Department revealed two things. First, the students' grades in regular examinations were mostly lower than average. Second, the teachers suggested that this low performance is due to the students' weaknesses in a number of academic study skills. Among the latter, lecture comprehension and note taking ability is prominent because the lecture is the dominant form of teaching in the English Department. Lecture-based aural comprehension and note taking skills are so critical to academic studies that they can significantly enhance or impede learning. The present study investigated these study skills to find out about the subjects' lecture comprehension and note taking ability in relation to academic underachievement in the English Department

The Review of the literature provided the theoretical framework to inform the research questions. A number of challenges stood in the way however. For instance, despite the crucial importance of listening comprehension in learning in general and lecture comprehension in higher education in particular, less research has addressed the nature of listening comprehension compared to the large amount of research done on reading and writing. One reason for this scarcity relates to the difficulty to undertake this type of research. The task is even more gruesome in lecture settings as the listeners have few opportunities to demonstrate understanding or non-understanding.

Lectures make higher cognitive demands on listeners. These demands are particularly related to the learning of complex systems of ideas and dealing with higher linguistic and conceptual demands. Efficient listening is a complex process that requires active mental processing on different levels. EFL students need to use efficient strategies to complete aural comprehension and note taking tasks. These strategies enable students to overcome comprehension problems and enhance their understanding in the lecture hall. Coping with the conceptual and linguistic demands in lectures requires the identification of the hierarchical structure of the lecture. Listeners also need to mobilise their prior knowledge of the topic and representation of the overall structure of the lecture to anticipate content at conceptual levels, maintain the continuity of context and to keep up with the speech rate.

Aural comprehension of lectures also calls for selection of key information. Listeners have to assess the relative value of the informational content of lectures to retain important parts. When achieved, successful comprehension paves the way to good note taking. Efficient learners use a number of strategies to note down, revise and review their notes. Immediate revision and condensation of notes increases understanding and recall.

Five research instruments, a test of lecture comprehension, survey questionnaires, the regular listening comprehension course, class observation of authentic lectures, and the subjects' lecture notes were used to collect data to inform the research questions. Sustained efforts were invested to ensure the high authenticity of the Test of Lecture Comprehension, as well as the other instruments in the research design. The goal was to enhance the validity of the test as a measure of lecture comprehension. Besides, factors that effect on the meaningfulness of test performance especially chance and cheating are taken into consideration in the interpretation of the results.

Methodological triangulation may reduce uncertainty about the validity of the data that were collected as insights come in from different sources. This of course increased the practical problems in carrying out the research by necessitating more resources in time for data collection and analysis. But gains in validity may outweigh these as they allow more confidence in making inferences from data. In the perspective of understanding more about the subjects' lecture comprehension ability, a questionnaire was used to investigate various aspects in the subjects' aural comprehension of academic lectures. Checks were integrated in the construction of the questionnaire and the other four research instruments and their implementation so as to ensure better reliability of the data.

The observation of authentic content lectures was necessary to crosscheck questionnaire data about features of academic lectures in the English Department. The sample of lectures observed is certainly too small to form a basis for generalisations about the characteristics of lectures in the English Department. Nevertheless, contrasting data from the two observers with questionnaire responses on lecture characteristics produced matching data that should be more accurate.

Finally, the evaluation of the syllabus of listening comprehension helped inform decisions to recommend modifications so that instructional objectives are more efficiently achieved. The efficiency of a language program can be examined only against the very objectives of the program itself. The statement of the listening syllabus in the English Department does *not* contain any reference to building the students' lecture comprehension ability.

Bearing in mind the limits of the research tools, only tentative answers to the research questions may be spelt out. Data from the five research instruments are concordant on some signs of insufficient ability of significant numbers of the subjects in understanding and taking notes on academic lectures. Matching

data from the subjects' performance in the Test of Lecture Comprehension, their lecture notes and the questionnaire responses seem to indicate that many students use poor lecture comprehension and note-taking strategies. The overall test performance consistently fell under 50% despite favourable factors, especially a checked accessibility of the input texts, the significant potential effect of chance and the relative ease of the close-ended test item type used.

The study suggests that the instruction received by the subjects in listening was insufficient in two aspects. First, instructional treatment is far from being exhaustive; most of efficient lecture comprehension and note taking strategies were overlooked. Second, strategies treated did not receive sufficient teaching with explicit presentation, sufficient practice and review. Listening work, as reflected in students' course notes and self-report by teachers and students, does not provide for sufficient training in lecture comprehension and note taking.

The qualitative and quantitative deficiencies concerning instruction in listening may in fact be a reflection of some general lack of concern for listening. The analysis of the official statement of the syllabus of listening reflects little concern to the listening skill as a whole. Lecture comprehension and note taking skills are not even mentioned. This situation stands chances to forgo as the syllabus makes no provisions for either formative or summative evaluation.

Drawing on these findings, the present study makes some recommendations that might enable students of English learn better from academic lectures. These recommendations concern instruction in lecture comprehension and note taking, lecturing, curriculum and program administration. Lecturers, teachers of language modules and program administrators can make positive contributions to the development of the target strategies and ultimately to learning in the Department.

An absolute must for lecture comprehension and note taking training is an increasing approximation of realism as the courses progress. Courses that purport to prepare the students for real university lectures must culminate in real university lectures. A clear correspondence between the needs of the students and the curriculum is a crucial requirement for academic achievement. The regular assessment of syllabi would stand as a safeguard against the alienation of the students' needs. Such alienation may be a major factor of underachievement. And in view of the urgent need for lecture comprehension and note taking strategies to maximize learning in content modules, curriculum collaboration is required to foster mutual contribution between the listening courses and the other curricular components. The modules of writing, speaking and phonetics can provide for work that ultimately contributes to the development of the students' lecture comprehension.

The issue of lecture learning is discussed in this study within the Department of English of the University of Blida. Other studies may examine the same issues with 1st and 3rd year students. A larger framework would consist in conducting a series of coordinated studies that would tackle study skills relevant to learning in English departments. These studies may target test preparation, test taking, oral discussion, oral report presentation, anxiety management, etc. The insights gained from this study and other complementary studies will have the common goal of informing teaching/learning for the students of English to raise work standards and achieve higher efficiency.

We do firmly think that when students are not given essential study skills to thrive in their learning environment, they are probably being penalized. Curriculum must come down to the very needs of the population it is supposed to instruct. The accurate analysis of needs and a regular adjustment of programs will make the learning/teaching process more effective and generative of the experience of success.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: The Preliminary survey questionnaire

Mr Maamar MISSOUM

Preliminary Survey to Identify Students' Needs and Difficulties

Dear Mrs/Mr ___________________

Would you please fill in this brief questionnaire.
For items 1, 2, and 3, please circle the number that best reflects your assessment

1) How would you qualify the *current* rate of success in the department of English *before retake one exam?*
1: very low 2: low 3: insufficient 4: fair 5: good 6: very good

2) How satisfied are you from the *current* overall 'level' of the students?
1: very low 2: low 3: insufficient 4: fair 5: good 6: very good

3) How do you evaluate your students' ability to:
1: very low 2: low 3: insufficient 4: fair 5: good 6: not usually used

- Listen to and understand your lectures	1	2	3	4	5	6
- Take notes on the lecture	1	2	3	4	5	6
- Ask questions to enhance their understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6
- Write good essays	1	2	3	4	5	6
- Make an oral presentation (exposé)	1	2	3	4	5	6
- Read efficiently	1	2	3	4	5	6

Any comments you would like to add: ………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………….

NB: If your course does not require some type(s) of the activities listed above and therefore you deem that few data are available to you to assess the skill involved, please circle number 6.

4) What skills are essential for students to succeed on your module?

1. …………
2. …………
3. …………
4. …………
5. …………

Appendix B: The Students' grades

1) 2001 Second year students

All grades and averages are out of 100

Subject #	Lis2	Con2	Lge2	Subject #	Lis2	Con2	Lge2	Subject #	Lis2	Con2	Lge2
45	90	67.65	63.1	343	37.5	40.15	50	588	80	44.95	58.1
68	72.5	50.8	66.85	457	57.5	35.05	51.25	8	72.5	44.55	59.65
433	55	56.75	62.5	365	45	44.3	41.25	336	55	50.55	57.15
15	52.5	55.95	60.9	121	45	37.45	50	616	45	49.4	60.9
43	48.75	54.05	63.1	150	47.5	37.5	50.6	483	55	51.2	53.4
156	67.5	52.45	59.05	743	47.5	39.95	45.6	583	60	46.45	56.25
16	65	48.65	60	690	47.5	38.9	43.4	113	65	45.95	55.9
18	67.5	47.05	62.8	709	37.5	40.15	43.4	184	47.5	49.2	55
128	60	53.05	54.35	183	50	36.45	43.4	340	42.5	47.8	58.75
17	80	44.55	59.65	344	38.75	37.2	44.65	33	52.5	51.05	51.55
361	70	50.15	57.15	668	40	43.2	37	69	70	46.2	53.75
361	62.5	47.25	57.8	177	27.5	34.75	50.6	157	55	47.8	53.4
173	62.5	46.3	57.8	10	31.25	39	44.65	589	65	42.95	54.35
169	70	47.4	54.65	287	42.5	36.05	42.15	339	50	44.3	57.15
329	52.5	50.3	54.05	195	38.75	38.95	40.9	666	52.5	44.9	53.4
611	52.5	49.2	50.6	194	47.5	35.9	40.6	371	62.5	42.8	53.75
312	50	46.15	56.25	8100	50	36.5	38.4	574	47.5	44.95	55
24	57.5	44.75	57.15	8100	41.25	35.3	45.6	468	47.5	47.4	50.3
483	50	45.15	52.15	378	35	32.8	46.55	424	65	46.95	48.75
446	50	40.45	60	388	30	33.8	41.55	83	67.5	42.55	50
5	57.5	45.15	50.3	390	35	31.65	36.55	37	45	44.05	54.65
565	45	43.3	55	187	47.5	30.05	35.9	477	37.5	46.25	54.65
123	60	42.2	53.75	99	35	29.55	33.4	179	52.5	42.55	54.65
7	57.5	42.4	53.4	174	40	30.75	30.6	22	67.5	39.4	55.3
363	52.5	42.45	52.8	28	87.5	64.95	67.8	38	65	40.95	50.6
597	65	41.7	51.85	70	77.5	63.05	72.15	640	57.5	41.3	51.55
115	60	42.45	50.9	180	70	57.45	68.1	100	47.5	46.55	49.65
110	40	46.15	51.85	1	75	60.65	63.1	356	48.75	43.65	48.75
713	45	43.05	52.15	328	67.5	59.3	66.55	298	45	41.15	53.4
644	60	41.15	50	627	80	57.8	65	357	48.75	40.9	50
635	60	43.8	46.85	6	80	55.15	66.55	341	62.5	43.8	45.3
378	30	45.5	48.75	161	70	58.05	60	976	62.5	40.8	47.5
126	45	40.8	50	73	62.5	57.95	59.35	129	35	49.15	43.4
75	47.5	43.5	45	342	55	53.95	66.55	647	55	39.55	46.85
314	70	61.9	72.15	410	77.5	52.5	60	265	42.5	42.8	45.3
467	46.25	59.85	67.5	178	52.5	52.5	65	83	52.5	39.05	47.8
374	57.5	61.9	60.15	349	75	49.4	59.65	405	55	34.55	50.6
189	65	57.4	59.65	36	70	47.3	63.1	532	42.5	37.4	46.25
46	70	56.15	58.4	396	65	46.75	61.25	331	40	38.65	45
81	67.5	55.45	57.15	30	70	46.25	60.6	438	40	38.95	45.6
65	52.5	56.6	59.2	187	50	50	59.65	38	46.25	31.75	45.9
438	70	51.8	60.9	133	37.5	47.4	64.5	444	50	30.5	38.75
153	75	48.65	60.6	186	60	50.25	56.85	384	20	37	37.15
735	65	51.5	56.25	41	57.5	50.45	53.75	477	37.5	31.25	35
2	77.5	64	65.9	360	67.5	45.75	54.65	358	75	50.1	56.25
152	70	72.45	65.9	954	36.25	44.45	61.7	101	62.5	53.5	56.85
176	82.5	54.65	66.55	483	57.5	48.3	52.8	643	67.5	48.4	60.3
71	70	57.8	61.25	592	57.5	44.85	57.8	100	75	46.9	59.65
598	50	57.2	60.3	375	65	42.4	55.9	366	70	45.75	62.5

Subject #	Lis2	Con2	Lge2	Subject #	Lis2	Con2	Lge2	Subject #	Lis2	Con2	Lge2
73	70	51.1	61.55	418	67.5	43.25	55.3	159	45	51.4	57.8
101	80	47.3	64.05	155	60	43.25	55	645	45	47.45	60.9
185	55	50.3	63.75	42	60	44.65	52.15	372	67.5	43.65	60.9
625	62.5	48.05	64.35	435	62.5	40.4	58.4	120	57.5	50.05	53.55
744	60	43.3	56.85	84	62.5	42.3	52.65	650	72.5	43.15	57.8
118	40	48.55	52.95	694	47.5	45.7	52.8	480	55	51.25	51.55
131	60	47.5	52.95	599	50	40.55	55.3	696	62.5	47.3	51.55
505	55	47.95	52.3	132	72.5	41	47.5	304	48.75	35.5	43.4
29	67.5	45.25	52.95	23	42.5	40	57.15	472	37.5	34.9	43.9
445	50	46.5	52.3	359	45	44.65	51.7	560	42.5	33.15	42.65
171	70	42.9	51.85	134	47.5	42.65	52.5	358	40	33.4	38.1
117	70	42.9	52.8	122	50	42.65	51.05	601	30	34.45	36.55
62	57.5	45.9	51.85	473	72.5	37.4	51.25	438	47.5	26.3	42.95
367	60	45.4	52.5	449	43.75	41.8	52	708	50	30.05	34.35
20	42.5	49.95	50.45	77	65	33.3	57.5	181	42.5	34.55	50.9
25	60	43.8	52.8	594	48.75	42.2	49.65	476	37.5	36.9	47.15
9	55	48.3	48.1	621	82.5	36.3	49.35	193	51.25	37.85	42.15
105	50	43.75	52.8	334	63.75	41.7	47.3	127	40	39.15	44.2
124	67.5	43.55	50.45	283	65	35.6	53.4	377	40	39.8	39.05
119	35	45.25	54.65	310	77.5	35.95	50.15	182	42.5	35.4	46.25
636	55	44.15	52.15	191	35	38.9	54.35	405	15	42.05	45.3
23	35	41.75	55.75	482	45	38.45	52.5	700	52.5	33.95	45.9
125	55	37.8	55.9	376	47.5	37.9	53.4	489	57.5	31.55	46.7
44	55	41.65	50	587	42.5	37.5	53.25	529	35	35.8	45
575	46.25	39.05	50.25	496	40	36.9	55.6	168	42.5	37.2	39.65
130	37.5	44.25	48.1	421	52.5	40.9	47.15	330	35	29.65	36.7
620	50	38.15	54.35	591	40	40	49.35	27	70	33.4	47.5
323	47.5	40.3	48.75	154	42.5	36.65	51.55	21	37.5	39.4	44.2
192	32.5	41.95	50.75	332	37.5	36.8	52.8	Average	53.99	44.92	53.11
100	45	41.15	50	603	47.5	36	49.05	STDEVP	11.94	7.07	6.58
436	55	39.7	47.3	561	47.5	39.55	44.65	<50	34	77	22
585	42.5	38.3	50.3	629	32.5	37.4	48.1	Max	90.00	67.65	72.15
257	35	37.95	51.85	114	45	36.65	46.85	Median	55.00	44.45	52.80
420	42.5	39.3	49.65	596	52.5	33.45	49.05	Min	30.00	26.30	34.35
350	45	39.95	46.7	695	30	35.3	49.05	Mode	60.00	48.65	52.80

Key:

- Lis2: Score obtained by subjects on 2nd year listening course.
- Con2: Score obtained by subjects on 2nd year content courses combined (cf. Definition of Terms).
- Lge2: Score obtained by subjects on 2nd year language courses combined (cf. Definition of Terms).
- STDEVP: Standard deviation of population
- <50: Number of subjects who obtained a score lower than 50%.
- Max: Highest score; Min: Lowest score.

Appendix B: The Students' grades

2) 2002 Subjects

153	1st Year Grades		2nd Year Grades						1st Year Grades		2nd Year Grades				
Subject #	List1	Cont1	List2	Cont2	Lge2	YeaAve 2	LeC Test	Subject #	List1	Cont1	List2	Cont2	Lge2	YeaAve 2	LeC Test
708	55	66.85	75	71	69.35	71	37	379	51.25	47.5	50	47.55	60.3	54.2	50
707	55	62.5	63.75	66.25	69.35	68.85	30	930	36.25	47.5	60	50.3	52.15	53.3	25
490	57.5	71.55	65	63.45	71.85	68.6	57	761	60	50	68.75	43.4	57.5	52.45	57
719	42.5	65.6	75	60.4	65.3	63.65	60	788	40	55	70	45.45	47.15	51.25	68
492	41.25	58.75	67.5	57.5	69.65	62.95	56	718	46.25	38.1	57.5	44	55.6	50.1	12
223	20	45	46.25	53.5	69.35	62.35	31	33	32.5	36.85	58.75	41.65	55.9	50.05	44
883	46.25	55.3	72.5	64.1	65.6	60.95	43	376	30	36.85	65	49.95	43.1	48.8	32
153	42.5	52.8	71.25	55.5	64.35	60.1	57	725	22.5	40	41.25	44.85	51.55	48.65	24
646	41.25	51.75	67.5	58	60.6	60	61	25	42.5	33.1	65	48.4	40	48.1	60
4	50	64.35	65	56.55	63.4	59.65	46	193			51.25	49	45.3	47.95	
561	27.5	60.3	57.5	45.55	68.75	57.95	52	981	27.5	44.35	53.75	41.05	51.25	47.85	
527	30	50.3	57.5	53.1	61.55	57.55	33	1302			50	43.55	49.05	47.05	
736	40	46.85	73.75	52.75	60.6	56.55	71	1027	30	39.35	58.75	39.75	51.55	46.35	43
72	23.75	19.35	57.5	53.95	61.25	56.55	42	686	25	36.55	51.25	42.25	42.8	44.85	30
669	41.25	55.6	63.75	50.05	61.25	56.05	27	160	16.25	40	45	42.75	46.25	44.5	30
1119	13.75	45	61.25	50	58.4	55.65	37	976	26.25	38.75	46.25	34.7	50.9	43.8	43
768	32.5	42.15	62.5	54.35	55.3	54.9	46	980	32.5	32.15	57.5	38.25	42.8	41.95	44
984	18.75	43.1	48.75	55.2	55.9	54.5	12	427	35	47.5	58.75	37.4	38.4	41.2	47
829	32.5	40.3	57.5	52.15	55.9	54.05	46	917	22.5	32.8	58.75	34.8	37.5	40.7	29
935	40	36.85	56.25	51.55	54.05	53.2	21	931	26.25	26.85	46.25	35.45	33.05	37.1	20
1051	25	48.4	55	46.5	53.75	51.8	26	370	22.5	30	53.75	30.35	37.8	36.95	
749	30	51.25	41.25	45.8	62.15	51.7	8	116	30	10	48.75	34	35	36	17
925	22.5	37.5	60	50.25	49.5	51.5	39	1053	30	29.05	48.75	30.25	37.5	35	30
753	15	40.9	43.75	46.25	50.9	51	9	601			62.5	24.6	33.75	34.35	
389			50.8	45	57.7	50.9		932	35	26.85	43.75	21.5	39.05	31.25	20
670	28.75	39.05	52.5	43.05	57.8	50.8	13	1338			32.5	16.75	19.35	19.05	
895	32.5	47.5	52.5	45.9	57.15	50.4	21	916	50	52.85	80	74.5	72.5	74.3	73
754	22.5	39.05	61.25	45.4	56.25	50.4	61	703	57.5	59.35	80	69.25	68.1	70.1	77
685	22.5	48.75	61.25	47.05	49.35	50	51	915	55	67.8	62.5	65.9	69.65	66.1	36
566	22.5	43.1	41.25	48	44.05	48.05	27	172	37.5	50.6	62.5	62.55	63.75	63.55	28
1083	22.5	37.8	38.75	42.4	52.5	47.1	16	887	50	55.6	65	61.5	59.65	62.25	42
929	32.5	40.9	56.25	38.45	52.15	46.2	27	460	50	53.4	68.75	61.15	59.35	62.2	57
924	25	25	48.75	35.75	53.4	43.4	25	674	35	50.6	75	58	57.5	60.45	32
977	10	41.25	30	41.05	48.1	42.15	8	913	41.25	55.6	63.75	60	59.05	59.5	17
734	17.5	29.35	36.25	32.65	52.8	40.4	15	893	50	57.5	58.75	59.35	68.1	59.35	17
692	21.25	43.75	62.5	32.55	46.25	40.15	37	923	40	54.35	58.75	58.9	58.1	59.05	
705	23.75	26.25	47.5	34.7	44.65	39.25	12	551	36.25	45.3	48.75	55.75	54.05	56.95	32
879	7.5	20.9	38.75	35.95	45	38.5	22	728			76.25	50.25	63.4	56.8	77
1109	13.75	24.35	38.75	33.3	44.65	38.2	8	549	31.25	56.55	61.25	54.2	51.25	55.4	32
694	30	38.4	47.5	33.25	43.1	38.2	20	645	36.25	30.6	65	50.25	54.05	54.3	23
656	50	43.75	67.5	33.35	41.55	38.1	51	891	45	51.85	57.5	50.7	60.3	53.95	38
486	60	55	61.25	58.3	78.75	66.35	35	769	33.75	56.25	35	57.05	52.8	53.75	12
767	52.5	62.8	86.25	59.8	69.35	65.8	54	765	31.25	48.1	55	49.2	56.85	53.35	12
377	60	55	75	59	66.25	65	67	898	45	51.85	68.75	45	61.85	53.25	62
152	60	58.4	65	58	67.5	63.95	60	911	32.5	42.15	50	49.85	52.15	52.75	42
998			70	54.35	70.9	61.5	39	342			61.25	54	47.15	52.5	
912	30	41.85	43.75	54.95	62.5	59.5	34	411	33.75	51.85	71.25	46.2	55.3	51	
732	47.5	54.65	66.25	53.05	65.6	59.2	46	773	28.75	45.6	53.75	50.5	55.9	50.55	23
27	50	62.5	73.75	50.25	67.8	59.1	30	903	45	52.15	60	46.3	54.65	50.25	36
711	50	26.25	70	55.8	60.9	58.4	57	824	35	45.9	61.25	48.05	55.3	50.15	27
95	41.25	52.8	62.5	48.65	64.35	57.65	21	897	38.75	45.6	60	48.25	48.1	50	33

153	1st Year Grades		2nd Year Grades					153	1st Year Grades		2nd Year Grades				
Subject #	List1	Cont1	List2	Cont2	Lge2	YeaAve 2	LeC Test	Subject #	List1	Cont1	List2	Cont2	Lge2	YeaAve 2	LeC Test
774	30	36.25	52.5	48.4	67.5	56.2	43	272	25	37.8	40	43.75	52.8	49.1	13
373	45	53.75	61.25	47.75	66.25	56.1	39	374	36.25	48.1	68.75	43.15	52.15	48.8	
622	41.25	50.3	70	48.05	60.6	55.9	81	1021	20	28.4	47.5	47.5	43.1	48.4	27
378	32.5	32.5	56.25	48.55	61.55	55.7	33	225	32.5	39.65	41.25	42.85	46.55	47.1	28
781	50	49.05	57.5	50.4	63.75	54.7	16	735	13.75	25.6	51.25	39.95	39.65	43.5	18
744	45	44.65	45	52.05	60.3	54.55	31	778	18.75	34.05	45	39	45.6	42.8	
921	45	41.85	48.75	56.75	59.65	54.2	12	914	17.5	34.05	47.5	38.6	43.4	42.55	23
1101			51.25	51.35	54.05	53.8	35	93	30	40.3	50	38.5	42.8	41.25	8
785	37.5	47.5	41.25	42.5	64.05	53.4	20	704	20	39.05	40	35.9	48.4	40.95	32
457	30	44.35	43.75	44.5	62.8	52.15	33	713	22.5	37.15	30	36.9	42.5	39.5	24
745	37.5	53.1	52.5	47.25	59.05	52.15	12	593	25	45	50	31.6	37.5	36.4	23
792	36.25	37.5	51.25	42.95	61.85	52.1	18	672	21.25	38.1	45	33.4	37.15	35.15	18
709	23.75	28.75	53.75	44.25	57.5	51.35	33	820	17.5	19.65	40	20.45	34.05	28.95	5
325	42.5	33.1	48.75	45.35	57.15	50.85	13	1055	17.5	19.65	46.25	32	44.65	37.95	31
444			50	48	53.75	50.65		4809	21.25	16.85	37.5	30.35	43.4	37.1	12
340			53.75	51.45	55.6	50.5		1044	15	27.5	48.75	28.45	40.6	34.05	48
751	47.5	40	60	43.25	55.6	50.3	16	905	67.5	71.25	71.25	69.65	77.5	73.45	64
587	50	50.6	57.5	43	58.75	50.3	34	491	52.5	53.75	65	70	62.5	67.8	48
906	27.5	44.35	52.5	46.75	55	50	31	665	36.25	50.3	60	58	61.55	61.55	34
509	20	35	62.5	44.7	54.05	49.6	21	899	50	61.25	53.75	61	61.25	61.35	43
691	25	40	45	37.5	61.85	49.5	34	569	41.25	56.55	55	61.25	57.15	60.2	42
777	22.5	25.9	66.25	38.9	60.3	49.05	54	470	53.75	44.35	52.5	61.6	54.65	59.1	49
588	30	35	42.5	38.7	58.4	48.95	12	412	50	61.25	76.25	48.25	65.9	59.1	68
787	35	38.1	38.75	39.55	51.25	48.55	38	677	50	51.25	61.25	54.6	61.85	58.35	30
667	31.25	36.55	56.25	39.25	57.8	48.5	32	461	50	50.6	46.25	53.65	65	57.35	39
675	42.5	46.85	46.25	41.05	58.1	48.2	12	155	56.25	49.35	51.25	48.7	60	54.5	49
1023			50	43.35	49.35	48.1	35								
922	30	27.8	46.25	45.5	47.15	47.8	18								
877	22.5	35.6	47.5	41.5	48.1	46.1	39								
892	21.25	29.05	51.25	39.9	48.75	45.95	22								
882	20	29.35	51.25	36.95	54.35	44.5	48								
384			55	35.25	49.05	43.4									
743	40	38.1	67.5	40.25	44.65	42.95	33	Averages	34.085	43.28	55.55	46.67	57.24	51.97	34.07
900	37.5	39.35	58.75	31.4	49.65	42.65	58	<50	68	57	29	56	22	32	69
334			53.75	33.05	47.5	41.05	31	Max	60	71.55	86.25	71	78.75	71	81
875	36.25	35.35	47.5	33.35	48.1	40.35	39	Median	32.5	42.63	55	46.38	57.75	51.43	33
726	17.5	24.35	40	36.5	42.15	39.85	35	Min	7.5	18.4	30	31.4	41.55	38.1	8
776	13.75	18.4	48.75	33.1	42.5	39.6	42	Mode	30	62.5	57.5	58	69.35	56.55	12
112	51.25	55.6	46.25	34.55	45.3	38.4	23	SDTEVP	12.843	11.8	10.75	8.74	8.132	7.823	16.42

Key:

- Lis2: Score obtained by subjects on 2nd year listening course.
- Con2: Score obtained by subjects on 2nd year content courses combined (cf. Definition of Terms).
- Lge2: Score obtained by subjects on 2nd year language courses combined (cf. Definition of Terms).
- STDEVP: Standard deviation of population
- <50: Number of subjects who obtained a score lower than 50%.
- Max: Highest score; Min: Lowest score.

Appendix C: The Test of lecture comprehension

NB: Text in italics *only* was in the subjects' version of the test papers.

The Test of Lecture Comprehension Version 1

University of Blida — *200…/200…*
Department of English — *Second Year*
Listening Comprehension — *Name/Surname:*
Group:

Second Exam

Text: The Victorian Age

General Instruction: Follow the lecture. You are allowed to take notes. The lecturer will stop at certain points. I shall ask you to turn over the answer sheet so that you put your answers to some comprehension activities. Put the sheet upside down as soon as you are asked to do so. Now listen to the lecturer.

On Leaf One

Task 1:
Salient Skill Assessed: Attending to the introduction to predict the overall structure of the talk.
At stop 1
Instruction: How many parts will the mini-lecture consist of?
a. 5 *b. 2* *c. 4* *d. …*
Key: d. 3

Task 2:
At stop 2
Salient Skill Assessed: Synthesizing meaning
Instruction: In the last few utterances the lecturer has been talking about…
a. Contribution of Victorianism
b. Important characteristics of Victorian Britain
c. Economic and political policies in Victorian Britain
d. ………………………………………
Key: ii

Task 3:
Salient Skill Assessed: Using macro/micro markers to predict and understand meaning
At stop 3
Instruction: What is the lecturer doing?
i. Criticizing the Victorian period
ii. Praising the Victorian period
iii. Analyzing the Victorian period
iv. ……………………..
Key: iv. Summarizing (...summed up)

On Leaf Two

Task 4:
Salient Skill Assessed: Recognizing the overall structure of a talk
At the end of the mini-lecture
Instruction: Put the relevant notes in an outline for the mini-lecture
1- The Victorian age
2- Evaluation of the Victorian period
3- The quest for wealth and power
4- Characteristics of Victorian Britain
5- The experience of industrialization
6-A long reign
The outline: (space provided)
Key:
3
5
1
6
4
2

Task 5:
Salient Skill Assessed: Recognizing key words
Instruction: Listen to the following list of words. During the second listening, note down the five words most relevant to the topic of the mini-lecture.
Africa contrast power Ireland Thatcher wealth Police
source industrialization marriage landowner
The key words are: (space provided)
Key: power wealth industrialization self-help discipline

The Test of Lecture Comprehension Version 2

University of Blida	*200…/200...*
Department of English	*Second Year*
Listening Comprehension	*Name/Surname:*
	Group:

Second Exam

Text: The Industrial Revolution

General Instruction: Follow the lecture. You are allowed to take notes. The lecturer will stop at certain points. I shall ask you to turn over the answer sheet so that you put your answers to some comprehension activities. Put the sheet upside down as soon as you are asked to do so. Now listen to the lecturer.

On Leaf One

Task 1:
Salient Skill Assessed: Attending to the introduction to predict the structure of the talk.
At stop 1
Instruction: The talk will be about…

i. *Narration of the main industrial developments in Britain*
ii. *Evaluation of the industrial revolution*
iii. *The background of the industrial revolution*
iv. ……………………………………….

Key: ii

Task 2:

Salient Skill Assessed: Predicting topic change
At stop 2
Instruction: What will the lecturer talk about next?

i. *Examples of the last point mentioned*
ii. *Details of the last point mentioned*
iii. *Moves to a second positive aspect*
iv. ……………………………………

Key: iv moves to a negative aspect (however,…)

Task 3:
Salient Skill Assessed: Inferring meaning
At stop 3
Instruction: What does the last sentence mean?

i. *The industrial revolution was a good thing*
ii. *The industrial revolution was a bad thing*
iii. *The British were a politically powerful people*
iv. …………………………………………..

Key: ii

On Leaf Two

Task 4:
At the end of the mini-lecture
Salient Skill Assessed: Identifying the attitude of the lecturer
Instruction: The lecturer speaks…

i. *Neither for or against the industrial revolution*
ii. *Rather critically of the industrial revolution*
iii. *Favorably about the industrial revolution*
iv. …………………………………………… .

Key: ii

Task 5:
Salient Skill Assessed: Recognizing key words
Instruction: Listen to the following list of words. During the second listening, note down the five words most relevant to the topic of the mini-lecture.

Working classes poor lack qualified government foreigner industrial claim economic success interest philosophical mind contrast price British pay

The key words are: (space provided)

Key: working classes poor industrial economic success contrast

The Test of Lecture Comprehension Version 3

University of Blida — *200…/200…*
Department of English — *Second Year*
Listening Comprehension — *Name/Surname:*
Group:

Second Exam

Text: The Age of Imperialism

General Instruction: Follow the lecture. You are allowed to take notes. The lecturer will stop at certain points. I shall ask you to turn over the answer sheet so that you put your answers to some comprehension activities. Put the sheet upside down as soon as you are asked to do so. Now listen to the lecturer.

On Leaf One

Task 1:
Salient Skill Assessed: Attending to the introduction to predict the overall structure of the talk.
At stop 1
Instruction: How many parts will the mini-lecture consist of?

a. 5 *b. 2* *c. 4* *d. …*

Key: d. 3 (...three stages)

Task 2:
Salient Skill Assessed: Following/predicting topic development based on previous text/context
At stop 2
Instruction: Is the lecturer going to talk about…

i. Geography of Australia and New Zealand
ii. Political importance of Australia and New Zealand
iii. Position in Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand
iv. ………………………………………………………… .

Key: iv British expansion in Australia and New Zealand

Task 3:
Salient Skill Assessed: Guessing the meaning of unknown words from the context
At stop 3
Instruction: What is the definition that is closest to the meaning of the word mutinied

i. Participated in military exercises
ii. Refused to obey orders
iii. Ensured security
iv. …………………. .

Key: ii

On Leaf Two

Task 4:
Salient Skill Assessed: Recognize the overall structure of a talk
At the end of the mini-lecture
Instruction: Put the relevant notes in an outline for the mini-lecture

1- Economic imperialism
2- Pacific Ocean
3- Africa
4- French colonization versus British colonization
5- Expansion in the world
6- India
7- First serious problem in the empire

The outline: (space provided)
Key:
7
1
5
  2
  6
  3

Task 5:
Salient Skill Assessed: Recognizing key words
Instruction: Listen to the following list of words. During the second listening, note down the five words most relevant to the topic of the mini-lecture.

Divided age empire used stage expansion independence
dominions states taxes company mercantilism motive
Waterloo Australia

The key words are: (space provided)

Key: empire expansion independence mercantilism dominions

The Test of Lecture Comprehension Version 4

University of Blida	*200…/200…*
Department of English	*Second Year*
Listening Comprehension	*Name/Surname:*
	Group:

Second Exam

Text: Motives and Considerations in British Imperialism

General Instruction: Follow the lecture. You are allowed to take notes. The lecturer will stop at certain points. I shall ask you to turn over the answer sheet so that you put your answers to some comprehension activities. Put the sheet upside down as soon as you are asked to do so. Now listen to the lecturer.

On Leaf One

Task 1:
Salient Skill Assessed: Attending to the introduction to predict the overall structure of the talk.
At stop 1
Instruction: Is the lecturer going to speak about?

i. *The stages of British imperialism*
ii. *Factors behind British imperialism*
iii. *Aspects of the power of Britain*
iv. ……………………………. .

Key: ii

Task 2:
Salient Skill Assessed: Guessing meaning of unknown words
At stop 2
Instruction: What is the word closest in meaning to surplus?

a. excessive *b. added* *c. extra* *d. ….*

Key: c.

Task 3:
Salient Skill Assessed: Using macro/micro markers to identify topic change
At stop 3
Instruction: What is the lecturer about to talk about?

i. A new type of considerations
ii. Another example of cultural considerations
iii. A summary of different considerations
iv. …………………………………….. .

Key: i (There are other considerations)

On Leaf Two

Task 4:
Salient Skill Assessed: Recognize the overall structure of a talk
At the end of the mini-lecture
Instruction: Put the relevant notes in an outline for the mini-lecture

1- The cultural mission
2- The role of education
3- Expansion throughout the world
4- The role of philosophy
5- National feelings
6- Economic considerations
7- The role of the press

The outline: (space provided)
Key:
3
6
1
5
7
4
Irrelevant: 2

Task 5:
Salient Skill Assessed: Recognizing key words
Instruction: Listen to the following list of words. During the second listening, note down the five words most relevant to the topic of the mini-lecture.

Goal Egypt strategic argument inspired attention markets Darwinism needed historian nationalism savage achievement government motivation

The key words are: (space provided)
Key: strategic markets Darwinismnationalism motivation

Appendix D: The Test of lecture comprehension- transcripts of input lectures

Version 1: The Victorian Age

Today, I shall briefly talk about an important phase in the history of Britain, 18th, 19th c… We'll be examining three points.

The first point [digression about the Algerian Revolution and effects on the nation and importance of the period in its history]

In 1701, it was believed that natural wealth has risen by 20 % since 1688 [Stop 1]. This wealth was in large part generated at home, but some of it was derived from the quest of wealth and power abroad; i.e. from English colonies in America, Africa and Asia. Yet, land remained the major source of wealth and power. In 1800, landowners owned between 20 –25% of lands in England. Therefore, "business" marriages were common.

The second point I would like to talk about is the period between 1760 –1830 that saw a rapid increase in the rate of economic development. Innovations were dynamically adopted and put into practice. Coal for its part fuelled the industrial revolution. Thus, economic as well as social life in England was undergoing a deep transformation; the political scene, however, proved more conservative.

The last point deals with the longest reign in the history of the British monarchy: Queen Victoria. Victorians were named after Victoria, queen of Britain and Ireland. Some historians said that she reigned over a society dominated by contrast. Her 63-year reign can most usefully be divided into early, middle and late periods. The middle period (1851-70) was a time of economic progress, cultural diversity, balance of interest and thus it was a time of social stability.

Victorians brought police institution and uncorrupted civil service [digression about capitalism and liberalism in economy and the pragmatic spirit of Anglo-Saxon peoples]. It was also the triumph of "self-help" and "laissez faire" doctrines. For many Victorians, duty took precedence over inclination and moral over the pursuit of pleasure or of power. It was also an age of religious division and disputes. Franchise was extended, if narrowly, in 1867 and 1884-5, and rose the debate over "home rule" in Ireland which split Gladstone's Liberal Party. And finally the introduction of compulsory schooling (1890's) marked late Victorianism. In the new board schools, pupils were to be disciplined to accept their place in society and to observe the conventions [Stop 2].

To sum up our talk, the Victorian spirit may be expressed by three words: thrift, hard work, and discipline. These values "were the values when our country became great"[Stop 3] boasted Mrs. Thatcher. However, during the reign of Edward II (1901-10) many Victorian values were removed and increasing recognition of the inequalities of society produced a sharp feeling of guilt and more organised forms of protest.

Version 2: The Industrial Revolution

[Evaluation of the industrial revolution - Relating to prior knowledge]

It is actually difficult for a foreigner to make up his mind about Industrial (evolution) or revolution especially when he learns that even the British whether those who lived the period or the contemporaries. Historians have not come to a consensus. However, two main trends of historians are distinguishable. Social historians "charge" the industrial revolution of making so many people suffering, sometimes to death. For them it was all "black". Economic historians on the other hand, claim that the industrial revolution was all-good for the [British] nation (including governors and governed, rich and poor!) in the light of the huge accumulated wealth, supporting their claim with lists of figures portraying the huge economic success [Stop 1].

The industrial revolution, it is undeniable, gave Britain its economic, political and military power and its great prestige (…pride…). Thanks to the industrial revolution, Britain "ruled the waves" and built up its empire. However, [Stop 2] a simple man without a heavy philosophical mind would have been stuck before the atrocities displayed on the London of 1851. Britain was hailed as the workshop of the world, but this exterior prestige had no counterpart at home - drunkenness (since liquors were cheaper than bread) adultery, the current begging, people suffering hunger and cold, some screaming and others just moaning. London, the world's capital city, could be qualified, to be fair and just, a city of exorbitant wealth, large castles and estates, begging, adultery, crime and hungry-to-death poor. After all, London and all Britain were governed by contrast.

The working classes had to pay the price of the revolution, as any revolution requires sacrifices; Britain (more accurately) the governors, either by political power or by the force of money, sacrificed the workers.

The industrial revolution could have been so good an event for all the British or at least most of them had the moneyed and the politically powered people forgotten from time to time their own interest [Stop 3]. The lack of safeguards that could have eased the bad conditions of the poor and smoothed their pains, was the by-product of the government's non-interference in almost every area on the ground of the prevailing and triumphant "laissez-faire" policy and its watchword: self-help.

[Digressions: - Did we have an industrial revolution?
- British prestige and pride]

Version 3: The Age of Imperialism

Beginning from the fifteenth century, Britain built up a large empire of territories rich in human resources as well as in natural wealth. The British were the masters in the Northern Hemisphere as well as in the Southern Hemisphere, in the Old World as well as the New World. Along five centuries, 15th – 20th, motives and ways of expansion varied; thus the building of the empire may be divided into three stages:

First we'll talk about the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These were an age of discovery, a race for spices and precious metals. Britain had to battle over lucrative markets (especially spices) including waging naval wars against the Dutch/Spain and France. Finally the authority of the English monarchs extended to the New World (America and Canada) and India … indirectly through their subjects of East Indian Company) [Stop 1]. Britain enjoyed the wealth of its dominions until the first setback befell; the thirteen colonies of America decided to break with the mother country and fought from 1775-1783 for their independence. When King George IV accepted the independence of what used to be his property, there was a general feeling that the British settlement abroad had come to an end.

Now let's move on to the second point ... Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, trade was the motive which urged the British to go overseas seeking profit and exchanging goods. The Crown imposed all sorts of taxes and regulations to protect British goods and market from any trade rivals.

Finally comes the era of Imperialism. After defeating Napoleon in Waterloo in 1815, Britain suddenly found herself dominant power in the world. Britain resumed expansion. Thus the British fleet took over Aden (1839) and Hong Kong (1842) and made them telegraph and mailing stations. Australia and New Zealand [Stop 2] were claimed by Captain Cook in 1770. They were first used as penal colonies: the non-desired: thieves, murderers, troublemakers, etc. were dumped there. But the situation changed totally when gold was discovered. Thus settlement increased especially after 1851. In Asia, India used to be the East India Company concession until in 1857; some soldiers mutinied against the rulers of the company. The government saw the danger and eventually started to intervene in India's affairs and appointed governmental officials [Stop 3]. In 1876, Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India, "the jewel of the crown". In Africa, it was the missionaries who first started penetrating the continent seeking to "civilise" and Christianise the black tribal men. Britain had control only of the Cape (of Good Hope). But when gold and diamond were discovered the water-mouthed European countries scrambled over African rich territories. Britain for itself engaged in two wars against the Boers (Dutch farmers) to take over the Transvaal (1888-1902).

Robert Luthy, a Swiss historian says describing the British expansion through the last centuries: " Those who promoted expansion on were not the governments and states but rather the hundreds of thousands of colonists, merchants, pioneers and adventurers. It's after 1880 that the role of the state increased in order to pursue colonisation."

Version 4: Reasons for Imperialism

[Britain a world power especially between 18th and 19th centuries] Why did Britain become a world power during 4 centuries 16-20? [Stop 1] Elizabeth the First was the first English monarch who understood that Britain had 'to rule the waves'. The achievement of that enthusiastic goal required a healthy economy and finance, a strong fleet and courageous men who would conquer the world. After defeating France, the unrivalled Britain started to take over strategic points throughout the world. Military bases were established in Aden, the Cape, Malta, Ceylon, Mauritius, etc. From then on, Britain had cast her military dominance on the seas and oceans of the globe; she had started to rule the waves. Singapore (1819), New Zealand (1840), Nigeria (1860- 1900), after a fight with the French, Rhodesia (named after Rhodes who found gold there) (1888), Egypt (1892), Uganda (1894), Sudan etc. fell by different means and manners in British hands.

Trade, capital and profit were the core of the British motivation to go overseas. The British would trade, make profit and if they pleased, they would colonise. More capital was needed. The already owned capital had to be invested. The various products of the English mills had to find new markets, new consumers. These interests organised in groups of pressure (lobbies). For instance, the prestigious East Indian Company and other companies were the first imperialists. Adam Smith was the first to point out the colonial market to sell the surplus of English production. Therefore "territories had been annexed because the almighty investors needed them", as historian Hobson concluded [Stop 2].

Moreover, the English of course spread in what became later British dominions long before the armies, and sometimes along with them. Their mission was defined and inspired by Kiplin's poem The White Man's Burden; that is to civilise and christianise the wild, savage and uncivilised people, towards whom they felt the duty to teach their British way of life, their culture and obedience towards to the white man.

There are other considerations [Stop 3], whenever troubles rose at home, the government made use of national feelings to divert the public attention from domestic problems to the extent that Britain involved herself in useless wars against Russia, for instance, only to protect her rank in the world. "It is the British Empire, its flag, its presence in the world, its future on seas, and its prestige which are involved" argued Prime Minister Anthony Eden in 1956 to justify the trilateral assault on Egypt.

Moreover, quality papers of the imperialist era influenced a great deal the minds of the British people. Whenever the interest of Britain required the deployment of new force and national motivation, mass circulation press answered this need by alarming, exaggerating and sometimes fallacious, articles and the nation would just rush to its feet.

The British were the strongest economically and military speaking. Therefore they believed deeply and irrevocably that it was their duty to assume the responsibility of governing the world and of course to enjoy the privileges of the totalitarian governor. They were yet ready with logical and rational arguments to bring around anyone who might dare questioning Britain's mission.

Appendix E: The Lecture observation scheme

Date: Module: Level: Groups:
Topic: Observation Time: From ……… to ………

Section One: Lecture Content (on leaf one)

Teacher's verbal Information	Teacher's non-verbal information (intonation rise, facial expressions, gestures, etc. for emphasis)	Notations on the blackboard	The students (questions, clarification requests, comments, and other interventions)

Section Two: Lecture Features (on leaf two)

1- Lecturer's Language

Lecturer talks at a speed that is slow average quick
Lecturer makes himself or herself heard by everyone rarely sometimes often always
Overall evaluation of lecturer's language lexical level easy appropriate difficult
Syntactic level easy appropriate difficult

2- Lecture Style: How Often

(never-rarely-sometimes-often-always)

Lecturer structures talk introducing, developing and concluding ….
Lecturer uses topic direction expressions like "now, I'll talk about…", "Let us examine.", "the next point is…", etc. ….
Lecturer invites questions ….
Lecturer asks questions ….
Lecturer talks from notes ….
Lecturer reads from notes ….
Lecturer dictates ….
Students ask for clarification ….
Students ask for repetition ….
Students make comments ….

Lecturer asks questions about previous session(s) yes/no
Lecturer relates content of lecture to the students' knowledge yes/no
Lecturer writes extensive notes on the blackboard yes/no
Lecturer writes key words on the blackboard yes/no
Lecturer uses drawings, charts, maps, etc. yes/no
Lecturer distributes handouts related to the topic before lecture yes/no
Lecturer distributes handouts related to the topic after lecture yes/no
Students present exposé yes/no

Appendix F: The Students' questionnaire

Students Questionnaire

Please put a tick in the box which is nearest to your answer

	How often do you …	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
01	Essentially rely on your lecture notes to prepare for exams?					
02	Try to take down full sentences from lectures?					
03	Use abbreviations that you may change later?					
04	Note down information in your own words?					
05	Use regular abbreviations?					
06	Note down information then later decide if it is interesting to rewrite or not for exam preparation?					
07	Decide while you are taking notes whether the information is important to note down?					
08	Pay attention to and note down what is written on the blackboard?					
09	Compare and complete your notes with classmates?					
10	Find reading and rewriting your notes difficult because of					
	A. Illegible handwriting?					
	B. Notes incomplete?					
	C. Abbreviations not clear?					
11	Use the following sources to complete your notes					
	a. Teacher's handouts?					
	b. Other students' notes?					
	c. Readings about the topic?					
12	Try to distinguish main from secondary points in a lecture?					
13	Ask questions to lecturer?					
14	Ask for repetition?					
15	Try to understand all new words?					
16	Pay attention to everything during the lectures?					
17	Pay more attention to some words and expressions than others? Why ? ………………………………………………………….					
18	Think about what the content of lecture will be from the title and introductory sentences?					
19	Think about the organisation of lecture (outline of points to be developed by lecturer)?					
20	Perceive organisation of lecture?					
21	Use markers to predict what the lecturer is going to say next? Would you please give 3 of such markers:…………………………….					
22	Think about what parts of the lecture you are going to concentrate on?					
23	Try to see connections between ideas presented during a lecture?					
24	Summarise mentally some of the information presented?					
25	Give a new and different example?					
26	Try to see relationship between what you already know and what is said by the lecturer?					
27	Ask yourself the following questions:					
	a. What is the general aim of the lecture?					
	b. Do I need to remember what the lecturer is saying?					
	c. Is this important to note down?					
	How often do lecturers …	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
28	Dictate whole sentences in lectures? Why? ……………………………					
29	Use expressions showing topic direction, such as "let's move to …", "I will now talk about…", etc.?					
30	Use visual support (drawings, maps)?					
31	Ask questions about previous lectures?					
32	Review content of previous lectures?					
33	Relate topic of lecture to your general knowledge?					
34	Put on blackboard notes?					
35	Put on blackboard sentences?					
36	Ask questions?					
37	Encourage students to take part in discussion?					
38	Give outline of lecture on a. Blackboard/handout?					
	b. Orally?					
39	Show important parts of lecture by					
	a. Repetition?					
	b. Attracting your attention to it?					
	c. Intonation (voice/speed)?					
40	Summarise main points?					

	How often do lecturers …	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
41	Distribute handouts about lecture					
	a. Days before the lecture?					
	b. On the lecture's day?					
	c. After the lecture?					
42	Do teachers in the secondary school give priority to listening activities (more time than other skills)?					
43	Do listening teachers explain most new vocabulary?					
	How often do courses of listening comprehension train you	never	Rarely	sometimes	often	always
44	To use visual support (maps, pictures, etc) to understand spoken language?					
45	How often do passages used feature					
	a- length exceeding 10 minutes?					
	b- Pauses, hesitation, false starts?					
	c- Repetition?					
	d- Fillers?					

Please state the effect of the following on your understanding of lectures. Put a tick under the number that best corresponds to your answer.

1 = source of big difficulty 2 = causes some difficulty 3= neutral 4 = helpful 5 = very helpful

		1	2	3	4	5
46	Lecturer's speed of delivery					
47	Lecturer pauses during lectures					
48	Lecturer repeating					
49	Lecturer summarising talk					
50	Lecturer using expressions like: "I will talk about...", "Now, I'm going to …", etc.					
51	Using conversations as listening passages					
52	Using mini-lectures as listening passages					
53	Taking notes while listening					
54	Lecturer writing notes on the blackboard					
55	Lecturer dictating					
56	Students presenting oral reports (éxposé)					
57	Students discussing					
58	Students asking questions					
59	Students making comments during lectures					
60	Listener trying to understand all words					
61	Ignoring unknown words while listening					
62	Thinking about the content of the lecture from the title and the introduction.					
63	Lecturer giving the outline of the lecture					
64	Thinking about the organisation of the lecture					
65	Paying attention to everything lecturers say					
66	Paying attention to some parts more than others					
67	Thinking about what the lecturer will talk about					

Tick under the number which best corresponds to your answer with:

1 = Low 2 = insufficient 3 = average 4 = good 5 = very good

	How do you evaluate your ability to	1	2	3	4	5
68	Distinguish important points from secondary ones.					
69	Follow and understand lectures about					
	a. Literature.					
	b. Civilisation.					
	c. Linguistics.					
70	Follow the development of the topic.					
71	See relationships between ideas in the lecture.					
72	See the organisation of the lecture.					
73	See and understand the role of markers like "now, let's talk about…", " Let me turn to …"…					
74	Identify words that are important to the topic.					
75	Understand the function of intonation for emphasis.					
76	Guess meaning of unknown words from the context.					
77	Understand contracted speech.					
78	Predict what the lecturer is going to talk about next.					
79	Identify ideas and their paraphrase (repetition).					
80	Understand and use what is written on the blackboard.					
81	To take notes of all important points in the lecture.					
82	To rewrite your notes.					
83	To use a regular system of abbreviation.					
84	To paraphrase spoken language.					
85	To summarise spoken language.					

Appendix G: The Questionnaire to teachers of listening comprehension

(Page One)

The Listening Teachers Questionnaire

Dear Mrs./Ms/Mr.

Would you please respond to its items and include any comments that you may wish to add. In this questionnaire, we would like to invite you to give your opinions about some aspects of teaching and learning in the department of English. We hope that your kind cooperation will help extend our understanding about some of our students' needs. Your detailed answers will hopefully suggest ideas to enhance their chances to achieve success.

We are much grateful to you for your cooperation and help.

Mr.M. Missoum

NB: Please note that you may return the questionnaire as you deem convenient to you: Either give it to Mr. Missoum or leave it with Ms .... at the department of English.

(Page Two)

Your Comments

(Pages Three and Four)
Please put a tick in the box which is nearest to your answer

How often do the students …	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
Pay attention to what is written on the blackboard?					
Try to note every thing down (always hurrying and distressed by the lecturer's speed)?					
Try to distinguish main from secondary points when listening?					
Ask questions?					
Ask for clarification?					
Ask for repetition from teacher or tape played again?					
Want to understand every word (ask you to repeat/explain words that are not central to the topic?					
Ignore unknown words (do not ask questions about them)?					
Pay more attention to some words than others (as an attempt to select)?					
Give a new example to the class (may be evidence of understanding)?					
Point out a relationship between ideas in the listening passage?					
Try to show relationships between what they already know and what does the speaker say?					
How often do you …	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
Use visual support (drawings, maps, etc)?					
Relate topic of the listening passage to the students' general knowledge?					
Put on blackboard notes?					
Put on blackboard sentences?					
How often do the listening passages include the following types of discourse:					
a. Narrative (dates, events, past tenses)?					
b. Descriptive/expositive (facts, relationships, present tenses)?					
c. Argumentative (arguments, thesis, antithesis, synthesis)?					
d. Conversational/dialogal?					
How often …	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
Do teachers in the secondary school give priority to listening activities (more time than other skills)?					
Do you systematically explain new vocabulary?					
Do passages used in listening look like lectures in civilisation, literature and linguistics?					
Do courses of listening comprehension train the students to …					
Follow and understand classmates' talk?					
Select important words and pay attention to them?					
Predict what the speaker will say next?					
Work on the outline of passage?					
Identify and pay attention to important parts of the lecture?					
Anticipate content of lecture from title?					
Anticipate content of lecture from the introduction?					
Do passages used feature					
A- Length exceeding 10 minutes?					
B- Pauses, hesitation, false starts?					
C- Repetition/paraphrase?					
D- Relation to each other (like episodes of a story)					
E- Fillers?					

Would you please state the effect of the following factors on the students' understanding of lectures? Put a tick under the number that best corresponds to your answer.

1 = source of big difficulty 2 = causes some difficulty 3 = neutral 4 = helpful 5 = very helpful

	1	2	3	4	5
Lecturer's speed of delivery.					
Lecturer pauses during lectures.					
Lecturer repeating.					
Lecturer summarizing talk.					
Lecturer using expressions like: "I will talk about..." "Now, I'm going to…" etc.					
Using conversations as listening passages.					
Taking notes while listening.					
Lecturer writing notes on the blackboard.					
Lecturer dictating.					
Using mini-lectures as listening passages.					
Students presenting oral presentations (exposé).					
Lecture talking only during lectures.					
Lecturer talking and encouraging students to discuss.					
Students asking questions.					
Students making comments during lectures.					
Trying to understand all words while listening.					
Paying attention to everything said by the lecturer.					
Lecturer giving the outline of the lecture.					
Paying attention to some parts in the listening passage more than others.					

Would you please tick under the number which best corresponds to your answer with:

1 = Low 2 = insufficient 3 = average 4 = good 5 = very good

How do you evaluate your students' ability to …	1	2	3	4	5
Distinguish important points from secondary and unimportant ones?					
Follow and understand lectures?					
Understand the speaker's implied meaning?					
Know what is the exact topic of the listening passage?					
Follow the development of the topic?					
See relationships between ideas in the listening passage?					
See the organisation of the listening passage?					
See and understand the role of markers like: "now, let's talk about…", "Let me turn to …", etc?					
Identify words that are important to the topic?					
Perceive and understand the function of intonation for emphasis?					
Guess meaning of unknown words from the context?					
Understand contracted speech?					
Use their knowledge to understand the new information in the listening passage?					
Predict what the speaker is going to talk about next?					
Relate an idea to its paraphrase?					
Understand oral presentation by classmates?					
Select important words and expressions to pay attention to them?					
Deal with new vocabulary?					
Deal with passages dense with new information (do they panic or select)?					
To take good notes of all important points in the passages?					
To rewrite their notes?					
To use a regular system of abbreviation?					
To paraphrase spoken language?					
To summarise spoken language?					

Appendix H: The Questionnaire to lecturers

(Page One)

Questionnaire to Lecturers

A Survey to Identify Students' Needs and Difficulties

Dear Mrs. /Ms/Mr. ________________,

Would you please respond to its items and include any comments that you may wish to add. In this questionnaire, we would like to invite you to give your opinions about some aspects of teaching and learning in the department of English. We hope that your kind cooperation will help extend our understanding about some of our students' needs. Your detailed answers will hopefully suggest ideas to enhance their chances to achieve success.

We are much grateful to you for your cooperation and help.

Mr M. Missoum

NB: Please note that you may return the questionnaire as you deem convenient to you: Either give it to Mr. Missoum or leave it with Ms .... at the department of English.

(Page Two)

Your Comments

(Pages Three and Four)

Please put a tick in the box which is nearest to your answer

	How often do the students …	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
01	Include materials not presented during lecture in their exam papers?					
02	Want to take down full sentences from lectures?					
03	Pay attention to what is written on the blackboard?					
04	Try to note every thing down (always hurrying and distressed by the lecturer's speed)?					
05	Ask questions?					
06	Ask for clarification?					
07	Ask for repetition?					
08	Want to understand every word (ask you to repeat/explain words that are not central to the topic?					
09	Give a new example to the class (may be evidence of understanding)?					
10	Point out a relationship between ideas in the lecture that the others may have been missing?					
11	Try to show relationships between what they already know and what does the lecturer say?					
	How often do you …	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
12	Dictate whole sentences in lectures? Why? ………………………					
13	Give exams that the students can completely answer from their lecture notes?					
14	Use expressions showing topic direction, such as "let's move to …", "I will now talk about…", etc?					
15	Use visual support (drawings, maps, etc.)?					
16	Ask questions about previous lectures?					
17	Review (recap) content of previous lectures?					
18	Relate topic of lecture to the students' general knowledge?					
19	Put on blackboard notes?					
20	Put on blackboard sentences?					
21	Ask questions about the topic?					
22	Give outline of lecture on					
	a. Blackboard/handout?					
	b. Orally?					
23	Show important parts of lecture by					
	a. Repetition?					
	b. Attracting attention to them verbally?					
	c. Intonation (voice/speed)?					
24	Summarize main points?					
25	Talk from notes?					
26	Talk and dictate?					
27	Distributes handouts about lecture					
	a. Days before the lecture?					
	b. On the lecture's day?					
	c. After the lecture?					
28	Assign students to do oral presentations?					
29	Repeat ideas/information in different words?					
30	Relate the topic of the lecture to the students' prior knowledge?					

31	How often do your lectures include the following types of discourse:	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
	a. Narrative (dates, events, past tenses)?					
	b. Descriptive/expositive (facts, relationships, present tenses)?					
	c. Argumentative (arguments, thesis, antithesis, synthesis)?					
	d. Conversational/dialogal (debates with students)?					
	How often …					
32	Do teachers in the secondary school give priority to listening activities (more time than other skills)?					
33	Do you systematically explain new vocabulary?					

Would you please state the effect of the following factors on the students' understanding of lectures. Put a tick under the number that best corresponds to your answer.

1 = source of big difficulty 2 = causes some difficulty 3 = neutral 4 = helpful 5= very helpful

		1	2	3	4	5
34	Lecturer's speed of delivery.					
35	Lecturer pauses during lectures.					
36	Lecturer repeating.					
37	Lecturer summarizing talk.					
38	Lecturer using expressions like: "I will talk about..." "Now, I'm going to…" etc.					
39	Using conversations as listening passages for listening comprehension training.					
40	Taking notes while listening.					
41	Lecturer writing notes on the blackboard.					
42	Lecturer dictating.					
43	Using mini-lectures as listening passages for listening comprehension training.					
44	Students doing oral presentations (exposé).					
45	Lecture talking only during lectures.					
46	Lecturer talking and encouraging students to discuss.					
47	Students asking questions.					
48	Students making comments during lectures.					
49	Trying to understand all words while listening.					
50	Paying attention to everything said by the lecturer.					
51	Lecturer giving the outline of the lecture.					
52	Paying attention to some parts of the lecture more than others.					

Would you please tick under the number which best corresponds to your answer, with:
1 = Low 2 = insufficient 3 = average 4 = good 5 = very good

	How do you evaluate your students' ability to …	1	2	3	4	5
53	Distinguish important points from secondary and unimportant ones?					
54	Follow and understand your lectures?					
55	Understand the speaker's implied meaning?					
56	Know what is the exact topic of the lecture?					
57	Follow the development of the topic?					
58	See relationships between ideas in the lecture?					
59	See the organization of the lecture?					
60	See and understand the role of markers like: "now, let's talk about…", "Let me turn to …", etc?					
61	Identify words that are important to the topic?					
62	Perceive and understand the function of intonation for emphasis?					
63	Guess meaning of unknown words from the context?					
64	Understand contracted speech?					
65	Use their knowledge to understand the new information in the lecture?					
66	Predict what the lecturer is going to talk about next?					
67	Relate an idea to its paraphrase?					
68	Understand and use what is written on the blackboard?					
69	Understand oral presentation by classmates?					
70	Select important words and expressions to pay attention to them?					
71	Deal with new vocabulary?					
72	Deal with lectures dense with new information (do they panic or select)?					
73	To take good notes of all important points in the lecture					
74	To rewrite their notes					
75	To use a regular system of abbreviation					
76	To paraphrase spoken language					
77	To summarize spoken language					

Appendix I: The Questionnaires aggregated responses

	How often do ...	Respondents							
1	(S) essentially rely on lecture notes to prepare for exams?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	0	4	32	20	25	81	
	(Reliance on lecture notes for exam preparation)	S02	0	1	18	21	17	57	
		S01+02	0	5	50	41	42	138	60.14
1	(S) include materials not presented during lecture in their exam papers?	L	3	6	3	0	0	12	75
13	(L) Give exams that the students can completely answer from their lecture notes?	L	0	2	2	4	4	12	66.66
2	(S) try to take down full sentences from lectures?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	0	14	37	23	9	83	
		S02	0	9	24	18	3	54	
		S01+02	0	23	61	41	12	137	38.66
2		L	0	0	1	7	4	12	91.66
		Total	0	23	62	48	16	149	
2	(S) try to note every thing down (always hurrying and distressed by the speaker's speed)?	LT	0	0	0	B	A C	3	100
3	(S) use abbreviations that you may change later?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	25	16	20	14	9	84	
		S02	4	11	15	17	9	56	
		S01+02	29	27	35	31	18	140	60
4	(S) Note down information in your own words?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	13	16	30	19	6	84	
		S02	2	6	23	10	14	55	
		S01+02	15	22	53	29	20	139	26.61
5	(S) Use regular abbreviations?	S01	12	22	18	9	23	84	
		S02	1	10	11	9	25	56	
		S01+02	13	32	29	18	48	140	52.85
6	(S) Note down information then later decide if it is interesting to rewrite or not for		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	
	exam for exam preparation?	S01	11	18	29	14	11	83	
		S02	9	14	12	9	12	56	
		S01+02	20	32	41	23	23	139	33.09
2	(S) Try to note every thing down (always hurrying, distressed by the lecturer's	LT	0	0	0	B	A C	3	
4	speed)	L	0	0	2	2	8	12	
		LT+L	0	0	2	3	10	15	86.66
7	(S) Decide while you are taking notes whether the information is important to note	S01	9	21	12	25	17	84	
	down?	S02	3	5	16	15	17	56	
		S01+02	12	26	28	40	34	140	27.14
8	(S) Pay attention to and note down what is written on the blackboard?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	1	1	7	22	53	84	
		S02	0	4	6	14	33	57	
		S01+02	1	5	13	36	86	141	13.47
1		LT		0	A	B	C	3	
3	Pay attention to what is written on the blackboard	L	0	1	2	6	3	12	
		LT+L	0	1	3	7	4	15	26.66
		Total	1	6	16	43	90	155	14.83
9	(S) Compare and complete your notes with classmates?	S01	0	8	26	18	31	83	
		S02	10	16	12	7	11	56	
		S01+02	10	24	38	25	42	139	24.46
10	(S) Find reading & rewriting your notes difficult because of		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
	A. Illegible handwriting?	S01	40	20	17	3	0	80	
		S02	25	15	14	2	1	57	
		S01+02	65	35	31	5	1	137	27
	B. Notes incomplete?	S01	4	10	27	21	19	81	
		S02	3	8	19	19	6	55	
		S01+02	7	18	46	40	25	136	81.61
	C. Abbreviations not clear?	S01	24	27	19	8	3	81	
		S02	24	11	13	6	2	56	
		S01+02	48	38	32	14	5	137	37.22
11	(S) Use the following sources to complete your notes:		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
	a. Teacher's handouts?	S01	20	11	12	11	29	83	
		S02	13	8	6	13	11	51	
		S01+02	33	19	18	24	40	134	38.8
	b. Other students' notes?	S01	6	15	31	21	10	83	
		S02	8	5	18	11	8	50	
		S01+02	14	20	49	32	18	133	37.59
	c. Readings about the topic?	S01	17	19	20	17	8	81	
		S02	6	11	10	9	13	49	
		S01+02	23	30	30	26	21	130	40.77

How often do ...

12	(S) Try to distinguish main from secondary points in a lecture?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	0	7	26	23	14	70	
		S02	2	9	22	6	5	44	
		S01+02	2	16	48	29	19	114	57.89
3		LT	A	0	B	0	0	2	100
		Total	3	16	49	29	19	116	58.62
13	(S) Ask questions to lecturer?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	10	28	25	7	14	84	
		S02	4	25	20	7	1	57	
		S01+02	14	53	45	14	15	141	47.51
5		L	0	3	5	3	1	12	
		Total	14	56	50	17	16	153	45.75
14	(S) Ask for repetition?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	4	24	28	9	19	84	
		S02	4	12	25	9	6	56	
		S01+02	8	36	53	18	25	140	30.71
6		LT	0	0	0	AB	C	3	
7		L	0	2	1	6	3	12	
		LT+L	0	2	1	8	4	15	83.33
		Total	8	38	54	26	29	155	35.48
5	(S) Ask for clarification?	LT	0	A C	B	0	0	3	
6		L	0	4	4	4	0	12	
		Total	0	6	5	4	0	15	26.66
15	(S) Try to understand all new words?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	0	3	17	13	51	84	
		S02	0	5	11	17	20	53	
		S01+02	0	8	28	30	71	137	73.72
7		LT	0	0	0	AB	C	3	
8		L	2	1	5	2	2	12	
		LT+L	2	1	5	4	3	15	46.66
		Total	2	9	33	34	74	152	71.05
8	(S) Ignore unknown words (do not ask questions about them)?	LT	0	B	0	A	0	2	50
16	(S) Pay attention to everything during the lectures?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	1	6	26	25	26	84	
		S02	4	2	18	21	12	57	
		S01+02	5	8	44	46	38	141	59.57
17	(S) Pay more attention to some words and expressions than others?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	3	3	17	27	22	72	
		S02	1	2	19	15	13	50	
		S01+02	4	5	36	42	35	122	36.88
9		LT	0	A	0	B	0	2	50
		Total	4	6	36	43	35	124	37.09
	Do listening comp courses train the students to …								
25	Select key words & pay attention to them?	LT	0	0	A	B	0	2	50
28	Identify and pay attention to important parts of the lecture?	LT	0	0	B	A	0	2	0
18	(S) Think about what the content of lecture will be from the title and introductory		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
	sentences?	S01	1	4	19	26	33	83	
		S02	0	5	12	20	20	57	
		S01+02	1	9	31	46	53	140	37.85
	Do courses of listening comprehension train the students to …								
29	Anticipate content of lecture from title?	LT	B	0	0	A	0	2	50
30	Anticipate content of lecture from the introduction?	LT	0	B	0	A	0	2	50
19	(S) Think about the organisation of lecture (outline of		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
	points to be developed by lecturer)?	S01	17	10	21	23	12	83	
		S02	1	9	26	15	6	57	
		S01+02	18	19	47	38	18	140	12.58
	Do courses of listening comprehension include …								
27	Work on the outline of passage?	LT	B	123	0	A	0	5	80
20	(S) Perceive organisation of lecture?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	9	28	33	12	2	84	
		S02	1	13	24	13	6	57	
		S01+02	10	41	57	25	8	141	36.17
21	(S) Use markers to predict what the lecturer is going to say next?	S01	22	15	18	9	8	72	
		S02	12	10	18	10	4	54	
		S01+02	34	25	36	19	12	126	9.52
	listening courses train the students to …								
26	Predict what the speaker will say next?	LT	0	B	0	A	0	2	50

How often do …

22	(S) Think about what parts of the lecture you are going to concentrate on?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	6	20	28	17	13	84	
		S02	1	7	21	15	13	57	
		S01+02	7	27	49	32	26	141	41.13
23	(S) Try to see connections between ideas presented during a lecture?	S01	1	13	25	27	18	84	
		S02	2	6	20	20	9	57	
		S01+02	3	19	45	47	27	141	19.14
11	(S) Point out a relationship between ideas in the listening passage?	LT	A	C	0	B	0	3	
10	(S) Point out a relationship between ideas in the lecture that the others may have	L	0	6	5	0	1	12	
	been missing?	LT+L	1	7	5	1	1	15	
24	(S) Summarise mentally some of the information presented?	S01	2	21	26	16	18	83	
		S02	2	15	15	14	10	56	
		S01+02	4	36	41	30	28	139	20.14
25	(S) Give a new and different example?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	3	25	35	17	4	84	
		S02	6	18	22	8	3	57	
		S01+02	9	43	57	25	7	141	36.87
10		LT	A	0	BC	0	0	3	
9		L	0	9	2	1	0	12	
		LT+L	1	9	4	1	0	15	66.66
		Total	10	51	61	26	7	155	39.35
26	(S) Try to see relationship between what you already know and what is said by the	S01	6	7	25	20	21	79	
	lecturer?	S02	1	4	17	17	18	57	
		S01+02	7	11	42	37	39	136	55.88
12	(S) Try to show relationships between what they already know and what the speaker	LT	A	C	0	B	0	3	33.33
11	says?	L	0	6	5	1	0	12	0
		LT+L	1	7	5	2	0	15	13.33
		Total	8	18	47	39	39	151	51.65
	The students' ability to		1	2	3	4	5	T	
67	Use their knowledge to understand the new information in the lecture/listening	LT	A	0	B C	0	0	3	
65	passage?	L	0	4	6	2	0	12	
		LT+L	1	4	8	2	0	15	33.33
27	(S) Ask yourself the following questions:		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
	a. What is the general aim of the lecture?	S01	4	4	18	23	35	84	
		S02	2	8	11	15	20	56	
		S01+02	6	12	29	38	55	140	39.28
	b. Do I need to remember what the lecturer is saying?	S01	4	6	22	24	27	83	
		S02	2	8	12	16	18	56	
		S01+02	6	14	34	40	45	139	32.37
	c. Is this important to note down?	S01	6	2	18	22	35	83	
		S02	2	3	11	12	28	56	
		S01+02	8	5	29	34	63	139	45.32

28	(L) Dictate whole sentences in lectures		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	0	1	28	26	14	69	
		S02	1	8	26	15	7	57	
		S01+02	1	9	54	41	21	126	49.2
12		L	2	2	3	4	1	12	41.66
		Total	3	11	57	45	22	138	48.55
25	(L) Talk from notes?	L	0	1	4	3	2	10	41.66
26	(L) Talk and dictate?	L	2	3	2	3	2	12	41.66
29	(L) Use expressions showing topic direction, such as "let's move to …", "I will	S01	1	7	18	31	25	84	
	now talk about…", etc.?	S02	0	5	16	11	25	57	
		S01+02	1	12	34	42	50	141	35.46
14		L	0	0	0	6	6	12	50
		Total	1	12	34	48	56	151	36.6
30	(L) Use visual support (drawings, maps)?	S01	21	39	15	8	1	84	
		S02	13	23	15	3	1	56	
		S01+02	34	62	30	11	2	140	68.57
13		LT	A	C	B	0	0	3	
15		L	1	3	4	3	1	12	
		LT+L	2	4	5	3	1	15	40
		Total	36	66	35	14	3	154	66.23
31	(L) Ask questions about previous lectures?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	4	31	31	14	4	84	
		S02	10	20	21	4	1	56	
		S01+02	14	51	52	18	5	140	3.56
16		L	0	0	1	3	7	11	63.63
		Total	14	51	53	21	12	151	7.94

How often do …

32	(L) Review content of previous lectures?	Rspdnt	**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	7	17	49	7	3	83	
		S02	6	25	17	3	5	56	
		S01+02	13	42	66	10	8	139	39.57
17		L	0	0	1	3	8	12	66.66
		Total	13	42	67	13	16	151	10.59
34	listening passages relate to each other (like episodes of a story)	LT	A	0	0	0	B	2	50
33	(L/LT) Relate topic of lecture/listening passage to your general knowledge?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	7	11	43	16	6	83	
		S02	20	19	7	5	5	56	
		S01+02	27	30	50	21	11	139	41
14		LT	0	0	C	0	AB	3	
18		L	0	0	1	7	4	12	
30	(L) Relate the topic of the lecture to the students' prior knowledge?	L	0	0	2	7	3	12	
		LT+L	0	0	4	14	9	27	85.18
		Total	27	30	54	35	20	166	33.13
34	(L/LT) Put notes on blackboard?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	3	11	32	20	18	84	
		S02	1	12	24	13	7	57	
		S01+02	4	23	56	33	25	141	19.14
15		LT	0	0	A C	B	0	3	
19		L	0	1	1	4	6	12	
		LT+L	0	1	3	5	6	15	6.66
		Total	4	24	59	38	31	156	17.95
35	(L/LT) Put sentences on blackboard?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	7	32	36	7	2	84	
		S02	12	21	11	6	6	56	
		S01+02	19	53	47	13	8	140	15
16		LT	0	0	C	B	0	2	
20		L	4	4	1	1	2	12	
		LT+L	4	4	2	2	2	14	28.57
		Total	23	57	49	15	10	154	16.23
36	(L) Ask questions?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	0	9	22	23	29	83	
		S02	0	1	12	13	29	55	
		S01+02	0	10	34	36	58	138	61.11
21		L	0	0	1	4	6	11	90.9
		Total	0	10	35	40	64	149	30.2
37	(L) Encourage students to take part in discussion?		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	5	17	18	25	19	84	
		S02	6	11	16	12	12	57	
		S01+02	11	28	34	37	31	141	27.65
38	(L) Give outline of lecture on		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
	a. Blackboard/handout?	S01	15	23	20	16	10	84	
		S02	11	14	21	8	2	56	
		S01+02	26	37	41	24	12	140	8.57
22		L	2	1	1	2	6	12	50
		Total	28	38	42	26	18	152	11.84
	b. Orally?	S01	14	16	28	11	15	84	
		S02	10	7	15	15	8	55	
		S01+02	24	23	43	26	23	139	16.54
22		L	5	0	0	3	4	12	33.33
		Total	29	23	43	29	27	151	17.88

39	(L) Show important parts of lecture by	Rspdnt	**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
	a. repetition?	S01	2	4	30	32	16	84	
		S02	3	6	16	16	14	55	
		S01+02	5	10	46	48	30	139	21.85
23		L	2	0	0	4	5	11	45.45
		Total	7	10	46	52	35	150	23.23
	b. attracting your attention to it?	S01	3	7	29	26	19	84	
		S02	3	5	19	17	11	55	
		S01+02	6	12	48	43	30	139	52.51
23		L	0	1	1	2	7	11	81.81
		Total	6	13	49	45	37	150	54.66
	c. intonation (voice/speed)?	S01	3	18	30	16	17	84	
		S02	5	6	14	11	19	55	
		S01+02	8	24	44	27	36	139	45.32
23		L	3	0	0	7	2	12	75
		Total	11	24	44	34	38	151	47.68

	How often do …	Rspdnt	N	R	S	O	A	T	SC
40	(L) Summarise main points?	S01	2	19	35	20	4	80	
		S02	3	10	30	10	2	55	
		S01+02	5	29	65	30	6	135	4.44
24		L	0	0	1	2	9	12	75
		Total	5	29	66	32	15	147	10.2
41	(L) Distribute handouts about lecture	S01	35	16	17	6	6	80	
	a. Days before the lecture?	S02	25	16	10	3	3	57	
		S01+02	60	32	27	9	9	137	67.15
27		L	6	0	3	1	2	12	50
		Total	66	32	30	10	11	149	65.77
	b. On the lecture's day?	S01	18	15	28	12	11	84	
		S02	9	9	23	9	7	57	
		S01+02	27	24	51	21	18	141	36.17
27		L	4	1	4	0	3	12	41.66
		Total	31	25	55	21	21	153	36.6
	c. After the lecture?	S01	25	25	15	12	7	84	
		S02	7	1	10	13	26	57	
		S01+02	32	26	25	25	33	141	41.13
27		L	8	3	1	0	0	12	91.66
	a+b+c: S= 47.97 L= 61.11 Total= 49.01	Total	40	29	26	25	33	153	45.09
42	Teachers in the secondary school give priority to listening activities (more time than	S01	26	25	17	12	2	82	
	other skills)?	S02	16	16	19	3	3	57	
		S01+02	42	41	36	15	5	139	59.71
21		LT	A	B	C	0	0	3	
32		L	1	5	3	1	0	10	
		LT+L	2	6	4	1	0	13	61.53
		Total	44	47	40	16	5	152	59.86
43	(LT) Explain most new vocabulary?	S01	0	3	18	23	40	84	
		S02	0	4	5	7	41	57	
		S01+02	0	7	23	30	81	141	78.72
22		LT	0	0	0	BC	A	3	
33	(LT) Systematically explain new vocabulary?	L	2	2	3	2	3	12	
		LT+L	2	2	3	4	4	15	53.33
		Total	2	9	26	34	85	156	76.28
	Listening courses train you (S) to Use visual support (maps, pictures, etc) to	S01	62	8	6	1	1	78	
44	understand spoken language?	S02	7	16	16	10	7	56	
		S01+02	69	24	22	11	8	134	89.55
45	Passages used in listening classes feature	S01	45	18	17	1	1	82	
	a- length exceeding 10 minutes?	S02	7	22	16	10	2	57	
		S01+02	52	40	33	11	3	139	66.18
31		LT	B	A	0	0	0	2	100
		Total	53	41	33	11	3	141	66.66
	b- Pauses, hesitation, false starts, fillers?	S01	15	21	26	13	6	81	
		S02	6	16	20	8	7	57	
		S01+02	21	37	46	21	13	138	42
32		LT	0	0	A	B	0	2	
		Total	21	37	47	22	13	140	41.4286
	c- Repetition?	S01	10	9	40	19	6	84	
		S02	1	7	21	14	14	57	
		S01+02	11	16	61	33	20	141	19.14
33		LT	0	0	AB	0	0	2	
29	(L) Repeat ideas/information in different words?	L	0	1	0	7	4	12	91.66
	Average of Features: S= 41.89 LT= 33.33 L= 41.70	Total	11	17	63	40	24	155	18.0645

What is the Effect of the … on the students' comprehension of lectures
1 = a source of big difficulty 2 = causes some difficulty 3 = neutral 4 = helpful 5 = very helpful

			1	2	3	4	5	T	SC
46	Lecturer's speed of delivery								
		S01	29	42	5	4	0	80	
		S02	22	26	5	2	1	56	
		S01+02	51	68	10	6	1	136	87.5
36		LT	A	B	C	0	0	3	
34		L	4	5	1	2	0	12	
		LT+L	5	6	2	2	0	15	73.33
		Total	56	74	12	8	1	151	86.09
47	Lecturer pauses during lectures	S01	0	5	13	39	17	74	
		S02	0	4	12	31	10	57	
		S01+02	0	9	25	70	27	131	74.04
37		LT	0	0	0	A	BC	3	
35		L	0	0	5	7	0	12	
		Total	0	9	30	78	29	146	73.29

What is the Effect of the … on the students' comprehension of lectures
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48	Lecturer repeating		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	2	3	7	21	48	81	
		S02	0	0	3	22	31	56	
		S01+02	2	3	10	43	79	137	89.05
38		LT	0	0	C	A	B	3	
36		L	0	0	3	7	2	12	
		LT+L	0	0	4	8	3	15	77.77
		Total	2	3	14	51	82	152	87.5
49	Lecturer summarising talk	S01	3	2	8	33	32	78	
		S02	1	1	5	25	25	57	
		S01+02	4	3	13	58	57	135	14.81
39		LT	0	0	0	ABC	0	3	
37		L	0	1	2	5	4	12	25
		LT+L	0	1	2	8	4	15	20
		Total	4	4	15	66	61	150	15.33
50	Lecturer using expressions like: “I will talk about...”, “Now, I’m going to	S01	1	1	18	30	30	80	
	…”, etc.	S02	0	0	11	26	19	56	
		S01+02	1	1	29	56	49	136	22.79
40		LT	0	0	0	1	AB	3	
38		L	0	0	2	3	7	12	
		LT+L	0	0	2	4	9	15	13.33
		Total	1	1	31	60	58	151	21.85
51	Using conversations as listening passages	S01	1	10	19	35	5	70	
		S02	2	5	13	22	15	57	
		S01+02	3	15	32	57	20	127	15.75
41		LT	0	0	B	A	0	2	
39		L	0	1	4	3	3	11	27.3
		LT+L	0	1	5	4	3	13	23.08
		Total	3	16	37	61	23	140	16.43
52	Using minilectures as listening passages		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	1	16	27	32	3	79	
		S02	0	3	17	25	6	51	
		S01+02	1	19	44	57	9	130	49.23
45		LT	0	0	AB	C	0	3	
43		L	0	0	5	3	3	11	
		LT+L	0	0	7	4	3	14	50
		Total	1	19	51	61	12	144	49.31
53	(S) Taking notes while listening	S01	8	12	6	41	17	84	
		S02	1	4	4	23	23	55	
		S01+02	9	16	10	64	40	139	17.99
42		LT	B	0	0	C	A	3	
40		L	1	3	0	6	1	11	
		LT+L	2	3	0	7	2	14	35.71
		Total	11	19	10	71	42	153	19.61
54	Lecturer writing notes on the blackboard	S01	1	2	7	38	36	84	
		S02	0	1	7	27	18	53	
		S01+02	1	3	14	65	54	137	86.86
43		LT	0	0	0	AB	C	3	
41		L	0	1	1	5	3	10	
		LT+L	0	1	1	7	4	13	84.62
		Total	1	4	15	72	58	150	86.67
55	Lecturer dictating	S01	3	6	12	35	27	83	
		S02	0	9	17	10	19	55	
		S01+02	3	15	29	45	46	138	65.94
44		LT	0	A	B	0	C	3	
42		L	1	2	3	4	1	11	
		LT+L	1	3	4	4	2	14	42.86
		Total	4	18	33	49	48	152	63.82
56	Students presenting oral reports (exposé)	S01	11	16	16	28	13	84	
		S02	4	10	10	26	7	57	
		S01+02	15	26	26	54	20	141	29.08
46		LT	0	0	0	ABC	0	3	
44		L	0	2	2	5	3	12	
		LT+L	0	2	2	8	3	15	13.33
		Total	15	28	28	62	23	156	27.5641
28	How often do (L) Assign students to do oral presentations?	L	1	3	1	5	1	11	41.66
70	The students' ability to understand oral presentation by classmates?	LT	0	A	0	BC	0	3	
69		L	1	2	6	3	0	12	
		Total	1	3	6	5	0	15	26.67

What is the Effect of the … on the students' comprehension of lectures
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57	Students discussing		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	3	6	20	43	12	84	
		S02	2	4	14	26	11	57	
		S01+02	5	10	34	69	23	141	65.24
58	Students asking questions		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	0	2	15	45	22	84	
		S02	0	0	5	35	15	55	
		S01+02	0	2	20	80	37	139	84.17
49		LT	0	0	0	C	AB	3	
47		L	0	0	1	4	6	11	
		LT+L	0	0	1	5	8	14	92.86
		Total	0	2	21	85	45	153	84.97
59	Students making comments during lectures		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	5	15	26	32	6	84	
		S02	4	11	20	13	6	54	
		S01+02	9	26	46	45	12	138	25.36
50		LT	0	B	0	AC	0	3	
48		L	0	0	0	7	2	9	
		LT+L	0	1	0	9	2	12	8.333
		Total	9	27	46	54	14	150	24

60	Listener trying to understand all words		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	10	33	24	8	8	83	
		S02	10	15	9	13	10	57	
		S01+02	20	48	33	21	18	140	27.86
51		LT	A	BC	0	0	0	3	
49		L	4	5	1	2	0	12	
		LT+L	5	7	1	2	0	15	13.33
		Total	25	55	34	23	18	155	26.45
61	Ignoring unknown words while listening	S01	29	36	14	3	2	84	
		S02	17	25	8	4	1	55	
		S01+02	46	61	22	7	3	139	76.97
62	Thinking about the content of the lecture from the title and the introduction.	S01	2	8	25	44	4	83	
		S02	1	3	11	36	6	57	
		S01+02	3	11	36	80	10	140	35.71
63	Lecturer giving the outline of the lecture	S01	2	2	11	42	27	84	
		S02	0	1	5	26	25	57	
		S01+02	2	3	16	68	52	141	14.89
53		LT	0	0	0	BC	A	3	
51		L	0	0	1	2	9	12	
		LT+L	0	0	1	4	10	15	6.67
		Total	2	3	17	72	62	156	14.10
64	Thinking about the organisation of the lecture		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	4	11	32	31	6	84	
		S02	0	8	19	26	4	57	
		S01+02	4	19	51	57	10	141	52.48
65	Paying attention to everything lecturers say	S01	5	13	12	41	13	84	
		S02	2	12	16	16	11	57	
		S01+02	7	25	28	57	24	141	57.45
52		LT	0	AB	C	0	0	3	
50		L	3	4	0	4	1	12	41.66
		LT+L	3	6	1	4	1	15	33.33
		Total	10	31	29	61	25	156	55.13
66	Paying attention to some parts of the lecture more than others	S01	4	16	14	35	13	82	
		S02	1	10	17	18	10	56	
		S01+02	5	26	31	53	23	138	44.93
54		LT	0	0	0	B	AC	3	
52		L	1	2	1	4	4	12	
		LT+L	1	2	1	5	6	15	26.67
		Total	6	28	32	58	29	153	43.14
67	Thinking about what the lecturer will talk about	S01	3	10	31	37	3	84	
		S02	2	7	13	27	7	56	
		S01+02	5	17	44	64	10	140	47.14
47	Lecture only talking during lectures.	LT	0	C	AB	0	0	3	
45		L	1	3	4	3	0	11	
		Total	1	4	6	3	0	14	64.29
48	Lecturer talking and encouraging students to discuss.	LT	0	0	0	C	AB	3	
46		L	1	0	0	4	7	12	
		Total	1	0	0	5	9	15	93.33

	Evaluation of the students' ability to 1 = Low 2 = insufficient 3 = average 4 = good 5 = very good								
68	Distinguish important points from secondary ones.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	2	13	45	18	6	84	
		S02	0	5	26	21	4	56	
		S01+02	2	18	71	39	10	140	14.28
55		LT	A	B	C	0	0	3	
53		L	1	7	2	2	0	12	
		LT+L	2	8	3	2	0	15	66.67
		Total	4	26	74	41	10	155	19.36
73	Deal with passages dense with new information (do they panic or select)?	LT	0	AC	B	0	0	3	
72	Deal with lectures dense with new information (do they panic or select)?	L	1	5	4	1	1	12	
		Total	2	9	5	1	1	18	61.11
69	Follow and understand lectures about		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
	a. Literature.	S01	11	11	39	20	3	84	
		S02	7	15	21	9	5	57	
		S01+02	18	26	60	29	8	141	31.2
	b. Civilisation.	S01	3	8	31	29	13	84	
		S02	1	5	22	20	6	54	
		S01+02	4	13	53	49	19	138	12.31
	c. Linguistics.	S01	11	15	32	18	5	81	
		S02	6	12	19	15	5	57	
		S01+02	17	27	51	33	10	138	31.88
	How often do the listening passages include the following types of discourse		**N**	**R**	**S**	**O**	**A**	**T**	**SC**
17	a. Narrative (dates, events, past tenses)?	LT	0	0	AC	B	0	3	
18	b. Descriptive/expositive (facts, relationships, present tenses)?	LT	0	0	A	B	C	3	
19	c. Argumentative (arguments, thesis, antithesis, synthesis)?	LT	0	BC	A	0	0	3	
20	d. Conversational / dialogal?	LT	0	0	0	AB	C	3	
31	How often do your lectures include the following types of discourse:	L	N	R	S	O	A	T	
	a. Narrative (dates, events, past tenses)?		0	0	2	8	2	12	83.33
	b. Descriptive/expositive (facts, relationships, present tenses)?		0	2	0	7	3	12	83.33
	c. Argumentative (arguments, thesis, antithesis, synthesis)?		0	2	3	4	2	11	50
	d. Conversational/dialogal (debates with students)?		2	0	3	4	2	11	50
	How often …		N	R	S	O	A	T	
23	Do passages used in listening look like lectures in civilization, literature and linguistics?	LT	AB	0	0	0	0	2	100
70	Follow the development of the topic.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	2	11	31	30	7	81	
		S02	1	2	28	18	7	56	
		S01+02	3	13	59	48	14	137	11.67
59		LT	A	0	BC	0	0	3	
57		L	0	3	6	3	0	12	
		LT+L	1	3	8	3	0	15	26.67
		Total	4	16	67	51	14	152	13.16
54	Follow and understand lectures?	L	0	2	5	5	0	12	
73	Know what is the exact topic of the listening	LT	0	0	AB	C	0	3	
56	passage/lecture?	L	0	1	7	4	0	12	8.333
		Total	0	1	9	5	0	15	6.67
71	See relationships between ideas in the lecture.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	4	9	36	32	3	84	
		S02	1	9	28	15	4	57	
		S01+02	5	18	64	47	7	141	38.29
60		LT	A	C	B	0	0	3	
58		L	0	5	4	3	0	12	
		LT+L	1	6	5	3	0	15	20
		Total	6	24	69	50	7	156	19.23
72	See the organisation of the lecture.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	7	8	41	24	2	82	
		S02	2	9	24	17	5	57	
		S01+02	9	17	65	41	7	139	34.53
61		LT	A	0	BC	0	0	3	
59		L	1	2	7	2	0	12	
		LT+L	2	2	9	2	0	15	13.33
		Total	11	19	74	43	7	154	19.48
73	See and understand the role of markers like: "now, let's talk about…", "let me		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
	turn to …", etc.	S01	0	5	11	49	18	83	
		S02	2	4	4	27	17	54	
		S01+02	2	9	15	76	35	137	8.02
62		LT	0	AB	0	C	0	3	
60		L	0	2	6	4	0	12	
		LT+L	0	4	6	5	0	15	33.33
		Total	2	13	21	81	35	152	9.868

Evaluation of the students' ability to	**1 = Low 2 = insufficient**	**3 = average**	**4 = good**		**5 = very good**				
74	Identify words that are important to the topic.	Rspdnt	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	0	14	37	27	4	82	
		S02	0	8	15	26	7	56	
		S01+02	0	22	52	53	11	138	15.94
63		LT	0	A	B	C	0	3	
61		L	0	4	5	3	0	12	
		LT+L	0	5	6	4	0	15	33.33
		Total	0	26	58	57	11	152	17.11
72	Select important words and expressions to pay attention to them?	LT	A	0	BC	0	0	3	
70		L	0	5	5	2	0	12	
		Total	1	5	7	2	0	15	
75	Understand the function of intonation for emphasis.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	6	11	25	35	7	84	
		S02	3	10	15	20	9	57	
		S01+02	9	21	40	55	16	141	21.28
64		LT	C	A	B	0	0	3	
62		L	2	5	4	1	0	12	
		LT+L	3	6	5	1	0	15	60
		Total	12	27	45	56	16	156	25
76	Guess the meaning of unknown words from the context.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	3	13	38	20	9	83	
		S02	1	9	20	19	5	54	
		S01+02	4	22	58	39	14	137	18.98
65		LT	B	AC	0	0	0	3	
63		L	5	1	4	2	0	12	
		LT+L	6	3	4	2	0	15	60
		Total	10	25	62	41	14	152	23.03
71	Deal with new vocabulary?	L	1	5	2	2	1	11	
72		LT	0	ABC	0	0	0	3	
		Total	1	8	2	2	1	14	64.29
77	Understand contracted speech.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	15	30	24	13	2	84	
		S02	5	14	23	10	4	56	
		S01+02	20	44	47	23	6	140	45.71
66		LT	0	AB	0	C	0	3	
64		L	2	3	4	0	0	9	
		LT+L	2	5	4	1	0	12	58.33
		Total	22	49	51	24	6	152	46.71
78	Predict what the lecturer is going to talk about next.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	5	27	35	15	1	83	
		S02	4	8	32	12	1	57	
		S01+02	9	35	67	27	2	140	31.43
68		LT	A	0	B	C	0	3	
66		L	3	2	4	1	1	11	
		LT+L	4	2	5	2	1	14	42.86
		Total	13	37	72	29	3	154	32.47
79	Identify ideas and their paraphrase (repetition)		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	3	11	37	28	4	83	
		S02	0	9	20	20	6	55	
		S01+02	3	20	57	48	10	138	16.67
69		LT	0	A	BC	0	0	3	
67		L	1	2	8	0	0	11	
		LT+L	1	3	10	0	0	14	28.57
		Total	4	23	67	48	10	152	17.76
80	Understand and use what is written on the blackboard.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	0	3	27	41	12	83	
		S02	0	4	10	32	11	57	
		S01+02	0	7	37	73	23	140	5
68		L	0	1	7	4	0	12	8.333
		Total	0	8	44	77	23	152	5.263
81	To take notes of all important points in the lecture.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	5	13	30	28	7	83	
		S02	1	8	17	19	12	57	
		S01+02	6	21	47	47	19	140	19.29
74		LT	A	B	C	0	0	3	
73		L	2	5	3	1	1	12	
		LT+L	3	6	4	1	1	15	60
		Total	9	29	51	49	20	158	24.05

Evaluation of the students' ability to… 1 = Low 2 = insufficient 3 = average 4 = good 5 = very good

82	To rewrite their notes.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	6	8	28	33	8	83	
		S02	2	3	12	28	11	56	
		S01+02	8	11	40	61	19	139	13.67
75		LT	A	B	0	0	0	2	
74		L	1	7	3	0	1	12	
		LT+L	2	8	3	0	1	14	71.43
		Total	10	19	43	61	20	153	18.95
83	To use a regular system of abbreviation.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	15	21	14	25	8	83	
		S02	2	10	23	13	8	56	
		S01+02	17	31	37	38	16	139	34.53
76		LT	AB	C	0	0	0	3	
75		L	7	1	3	1	0	12	
		LT+L	9	2	3	1	0	15	73.33
		Total	26	33	40	39	16	154	38.31
84	To paraphrase spoken language.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	11	15	37	15	4	82	
		S02	1	13	27	11	5	57	
		S01+02	12	28	64	26	9	139	28.78
77		LT	A	BC	0	0	0	3	
76		L	4	4	3	0	1	12	
		LT+L	5	6	3	0	1	15	73.33
		Total	17	34	67	26	10	154	33.12
85	To summarise spoken language.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**T**	**SC**
		S01	4	19	30	24	6	83	
		S02	3	10	18	20	6	57	
		S01+02	7	29	48	44	12	140	25.71
78		LT	AB	C	0	0	0	3	
77		L	3	6	2	0	1	12	
		LT+L	5	7	2	0	1	15	80
		Total	12	36	50	44	13	155	
57	Understand the speaker's implied meaning?	LT	AB	C	0	0	0	3	
55		L	1	3	5	1	1	11	
		Total	3	4	5	1	1	14	50

Key:

N= never; R=rarely; S=sometimes; O=often; A= always T= total Ave= average response
L= The lecturers; LT= The listening teachers, S= the subjects/students;
S01= 2001 subjects; S02=2002 subjects SC= The significant category (cells in yellow) ; a percentage to total responses; Rspndt= Respondents

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دراسة

استراتيجيات فهم المحاضرات و أخذ رؤوس أقلام عنها
لطلبة السنة الثانية في دائرة اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة البليدة

ملخص البحث

شهدت دائرة اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة البليدة خلال سنوات 1995-2002 ضعفا محسوسا في الإنجاز الأكاديمي للطلبة. و أظهر استبيان أولي لبعض أساتذة المعهد مع قراءة لنتائج طلبة السنة الثانية لموسمي 2000-2001 و 2001-2002 مؤشرات لصعوبات كان الطلبة يواجهونها. هذا ما دفعنا إلى البحث في سبب محتمل لتلك الصعوبات ألا وهو فهم المحاضرات و أخذ رؤوس أقلام عن محتواها. الاستماع للمحاضرات و أخذ رؤوس أقلام عن محتواها هما من المهارات الأكاديمية الأكثر استعمالا في دائرة اللغة الإنجليزية.

الهدف الأساسي للدراسة هو البحث في مهارات الطلبة قي هذا المجال. دراسة المراجع و البحوث المتعلقة بالموضوع ساعدتنا على وضع الإطار النظري للدراسة عن طريق توصيف الخصائص الأساسية للمحاضرة الجامعية و تحديد استراتيجيات الاستماع للمحاضرات و أخذ رؤوس أقلام. الاستماع الفعال يتطلب استعمال استراتيجيات لفهم المحاضرات و أخذ رؤوس أقلام مفيدة.

استعملت في الدراسة خمس أدوات بحث هي-1 ملاحظة محاضرات حقيقية 2- اختبار لفهم المحاضرات 3- رؤوس أقلام للطلبة 4- استبيان و5- تحليل لتدريس الاستماع و أخذ رؤوس أقلام في دائرة اللغة الإنجليزية. تعدد أدوات البحث ضروري لموازنة نقاط الضعف في كل أداة. نتائج البحث تبدو متناسقة مع فرضيات البحث 1- أن معظم الطلبة لم يستعملوا استراتيجيات فعالة لفهم المحاضرات و أخذ رؤوس أقلام و 2- أن تدريس الاستماع لم يوفر تدريبا ملائما على هذه الاستراتيجيات. لهذا نقدم بعض الاقتراحات لمساعدة الطلبة في دوائر اللغة الإنجليزية بالجامعات الجزائرية على تحصيل أفضل من المحاضرات.